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THE



TIMES

30p

FRIDAY JANUARY 19 1990

Republics at war as Russia drafts reserves

Gorbachov attacks anti-reform 'rabble'

From Michael Binyon, Moscow

President Gorbachov yesterday condemned "extremists, vandals and criminals" who were fanning conflict in the Trans-Caucasus, as Azerbaijani officials declared their republic was at war with neighbouring Armenia.

He also harshly criticized conservative opponents of his reforms, calling them "rabble" who wished to halt democratization for their own "unseemly ends".

The Soviet leader was addressing a meeting of workers and intellectuals in Moscow, as armed raids, arson and violent clashes continued unabated between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in the south.

General Dmitry Yazov, the Defence Minister, called up Soviet reservists as the 11,000 troops already in the troubled region fought to regain control of the situation.

The reservists are being used to guard roads and military bases, keep open

railway lines and reinforce the border regions with Turkey and Iran.

General Yazov, calling the situation a "major disaster", said there were too few regular interior ministry troops to keep order. He said the reservists as a rule were "young

men who recently served in the army and do not have families of their own."

The death toll in the clashes yesterday rose to 66 and the interior ministry said 220 people — including 26 police, and 31 soldiers — had been injured. More than 200 homes have been ransacked or set on fire, and there had been 66 raids on armories and Soviet government buildings. Troops had arrested more than 100 people.

The soldiers were empowered on Wednesday to open fire in self-defence and on militants attacking ammunition depots, but so far there have been no reports of their having done so.

Road blocks were still being set up in Azerbaijan and militants have enforced a virtual blockade of transit traffic to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, the disputed Armenian enclave inside Azerbaijan.

Guerrillas also blew up the water mains in two districts of Nagorno-Karabakh, with the supply in Stepanakert, the capital of the hilly region, dropping by two-thirds.

In Yerevan, the Armenian capital, electricity and heating have become erratic, and transport is running irregularly. The city has only enough fuel for a few more days, and a big aluminium plant has shut down because of power cuts.

Armed groups are still roaming the countryside, capturing weapons, ammunition and equipment. A unit of 3,000 Armenian militants surrounded the village of Kerki in Nakhichevan, the Azerbaijani enclave wedged between Armenia and Iran, and opened fire, but Tass said no-one was killed.

Meanwhile, the flight of Armenians from Baku gathered pace with 4,658 leaving the city since Wednesday. Armenian television showed scenes at the airport in Yerevan where old men, women and children with swollen faces tearfully recounted how they were forced to run,

sometimes barefoot, through the streets, chased by bands of Azerbaijanis. The refugees said the pogroms began on January 10, when Azerbaijanis began beating any Armenians in their path.

A French doctor said one 70-year-old woman had been raped and had both arms broken. Members of a French humanitarian team in Yerevan said some 700 Armenians had arrived from Baku in the past three days. Refugees were being housed in a nearby village.

About 3,000 refugees have arrived in Moscow over the past two days, and hundreds are clustered in the permanent mission of the Armenian republic here. Mr Eduard Alkayev, the mission's representative — the equivalent of a local ambassador to Moscow — said the city authorities were doing what they could to put up the refugees in hotels, guest houses and sanatoria.

Those anxious families huddled in the old building in the city centre are being brought food and warm clothing by Muscovites.

Across the city in the Soviet mission, Mr Zaur Rustam-Zade, the deputy head of the mission, accused Armenia of armed aggression in sending helicopters to shoot at Azerbaijanis.

"Military action with the use of helicopters and other means of destruction cannot be described as anything other than war," he told a press conference.

He said any attempt by the Soviet forces to impose a curfew in Baku would only inflame passions there. And he accused Moscow of "furious mistakes" by its indecisiveness in not curbing Armenian claims to Nagorno-Karabakh from the start.

In Baku, thousands of people demonstrated outside the Communist Party headquarters yesterday, demanding the removal of Soviet troops from the republic. One Azerbaijani party member said the local party appeared to have lost control of the situation. He said the nationalist Popular Front commanded huge support instead.

The Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent societies yesterday appealed for a truce to allow civilians to leave dangerous areas. They also called on militants to allow through food and baby food, medicines and warm clothing for the refugees.

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Reliving the baby snatch



Miss Caroline Taylor in a reconstruction yesterday of the abduction of a baby girl from St Thomas's Hospital, south London. Inset: Photofit of the wanted woman. Report: Page 2.

Patten offers concessions to Tory poll tax rebels

By Robin Oakley and Nicholas Wood

Mr Chris Patten last night offered two last-minute concessions to buy off Conservative backbench rebels over the poll tax.

The Secretary of State for the Environment promised MPs that he was ready to review the new formula for allocating Whitehall grants to towns and county halls if they proved to discriminate against Tory authorities.

Second, he pledged that he would not hesitate to use his powers to "cap" increases if they occurred at the "horrendous" levels that had been suggested by some Labour councils.

The concessions came as the Prime Minister led a rearguard action to save the community charge from a humiliating rebuff and to head off one of the biggest backbench revolts she has faced in 10 years.

As the Government battled against potential defeat on vital orders bringing the financial framework of the new tax into effect, Mr Patten made the concessions, with the Prime Minister at his side to underline her personal stake in the final passage of her "flagship" legislation.

Mrs Margaret Thatcher herself appealed to her MPs to concentrate their fire on extravagant Labour authorities rather than attacking the Government.

The concessions had been mentioned privately to some doubting Tory MPs during the past few days in a desperate attempt to stave off defeat, and they undoubtedly did enough to placate some critics.

But Mr Patten still had a difficult ride from Conser-

vative MPs as he sought to justify the thinking behind the grant distribution.

A succession of Tory backbenchers rose to question him, illustrating the deep anxiety felt across all sections of the party about the poll tax and its electoral consequences.

The rebels, who nearly two years ago cut the Government's majority to 25, have been joined in the past six

months by a significant group of right-wing opponents who have been swayed on learning of the penalty the charge will exact from Conservative authorities.

But some Conservative critics of the community charge saw the concessions as only marginal — there was no promise of any "new money" — and they were predicting that there would still be a big turnout for this Parliament of Tory MPs against their own Government.

Mr Patten specifically ruled out extra money to pay for the safety net switching money from rich to poor areas from its inception, saying there were better ways of spending £650 million.

He also refused extra cash to help the transition from rates to the community charge in low-rated areas, warning that this would only encourage local authorities to send even more. Addressing a rowdy Commons, Mr Patten was given a rough ride by his backbench critics.

In an attempt to defuse the tensions, he took nearly 20 interventions by Tory MPs in

Continued on page 20, col 3

Pay awards threat

Jobless figures warning

By Colin Narbrough, Economics Correspondent

Mr Michael Howard, the new Employment Secretary, yesterday warned that big pay awards threaten jobs as the downward movement of unemployment slows after falls for 41 consecutive months.

His warning accompanied figures showing that seasonally adjusted unemployment fell by 17,100 last month to 1,634,900. This was the smallest drop for three years.

The pound responded well, rising 0.3 points on its trade-weighted index, to 88.1, but fears about inflation and the Ford workers' rejection of a 10.2 per cent offer knocked £7 billion off share prices. The FT-SE index of the leading 100 shares ended 37 points lower at 2,336.9.

Retail price information to be published today is expected to show that price rises accelerated to an annual rate of 7.9 per cent last month from 7.7 per cent.

In the Commons, Mr John Major, the Chancellor, said that interest and mortgage rates would not be brought down until inflation is falling.

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Mr Howard said that while average earnings held steady, with annual growth of 9.25 per cent in November, unit wage costs were rising faster than in Britain's main competitors, putting jobs at risk.

In the third quarter, unit wage costs were 9.6 per cent

Stalker friend cleared

Fraud charges against Mr Kevin Taylor, the property developer at the heart of the Stalker affair, were thrown out yesterday in what Mr John Stalker described as his "final vindication".

Mr Stalker, the former Manchester deputy chief constable who had been at the head of the "shoot-to-kill" inquiry into the Royal Ulster Constabulary, said the prosecution of his friend had been entirely spurious. "It was a contrivance to justify my

removal from the Northern Ireland investigation."

Mr Stalker was suspended from duty and removed from the inquiry as a result of the investigations which led Mr Taylor to Manchester Crown Court on fraud charges.

But yesterday, Mr Michael Corkery, QC, for the prosecution, said it would not be proper to proceed with the 16-week trial after defence counsel submitted detectives had misled a judge when they won

Continued on page 20, col 1

Kidney surgeon admits 14 years of unethical practice

By John Young

A leading kidney surgeon astonished a disciplinary hearing of the General Medical Council yesterday by admitting that for 14 years he had behaved unethically by operating on donors without first meeting them and ascertaining their background and medical history.

Mr Michael Joyce, Consultant Urologist at Guy's Hospital, London, was at one point reduced to tears when asked how he had felt while

listening to the evidence of four Turkish witnesses who, it is alleged, were paid to donate their kidneys. "Dreadful", he

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replied. It was "an appalling story".

Mr Joyce is one of three doctors charged with serious professional misconduct in relation to the alleged payments. Yesterday, he admitted

all eight charges after one of them had been amended to state that he had unwittingly taken part in the sale of human organs.

He said that at the time the operations took place in 1988, he did not think he was doing anything wrong.

He had never been aware of any ethical guidelines but, after listening to the views of eminent surgeons at the hearing, he realized that he had "cut corners".

Terry Marsh charged with Warren shooting

By David Sapsted

Terry Marsh, the former world light-welterweight boxing champion, was charged last night with the attempted murder of Mr Frank Warren, his former manager.

Mr Marsh, aged 31, who was further charged with possessing 10 rounds of 9mm ammunition without a firearms certificate, will appear before magistrates at Barking, east London, today.

Mr Marsh was being held at Barking police station last night. He was questioned by

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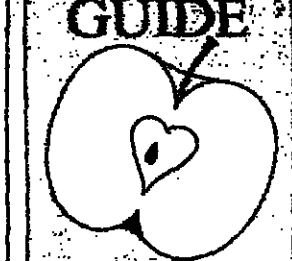
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THE TIMES GUIDE



TO HEALTHY LIVING

Sooner wed than dead?

● "From adolescence onwards sexuality and relationships can have all kinds of effects on our health." The Times Guide to Healthy Living concludes with an examination of the positive and negative power of love: page 10

Portfolio

PLATINUM

● There was only one winner of yesterday's £2,000 Portfolio Platinum prize (see page 3). Today's chance to win £2,000 is on page 29

Bank bought

National Australia Bank, the third biggest in Australia, mounted a strong foreign challenge in British retail banking yesterday by announcing the purchase of Yorkshire Bank for £976.5 million. NAB, which also owns the Clydesdale Bank, Ulster's Northern Bank and the National Irish Bank will become the United Kingdom's eighth biggest bank in terms of profits. Page 21

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Lord Hope: Praise for acting promptly over rumours.

By Richard Ford

Political Correspondent

Government ministers yesterday refused to become involved in the controversy surrounding the resignation of a Scottish High Court judge, amid allegations of homosexuality.

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Leader of the House, rejected demands in the Commons for a Government statement on the resignation of Lord Dervaird, who resigned after allegations of homosexuality were put to him by Lord Hope, the Lord President of the Court of Session.

Backbench MPs from all sides of the Commons said yesterday that without a statement on the resignation and other allegations concerning the activities of some other judges in Scotland whispering would continue and there would be

suspicions of an "establishment cover up". Sir Geoffrey insisted that the conduct of judges in Scotland was a matter for Lord Hope, the equivalent to the Lord Chief Justice in England.

He praised Lord Hope for having taken "prompt action to dispel rumours about events concerning the conduct of judges" north of the border.

As Sir Geoffrey resisted pressure for a statement, a former Master of the Rolls said any homosexual judge would be at risk from blackmail. Lord Denning said that although homosexuality was not illegal "it could be an element of blackmail against a judge".

He added: "Judges should be above reproach."

Lord Denning said although homosexuality was not a criminal offence, it was wholly deplorable. "I've never known anything like this before in all my years — not even a whiff of such a scandal".

Lord Dervaird, aged 55, was advised shortly before Christmas to resign or face an inquiry. His resignation was announced on December 22 — less than two years after he went on the bench.

During questions to Sir Geoffrey about next week's business in the Commons, Mr Jim Sillars, Scottish National MP for Govan, demanded a statement on the resignation next week. He said: "It is far better that the Government come clean now than people believe there is a cover up".

Later Mr Dennis Canavan, Labour MP for Falkirk West, also demanded a statement on the issue.

NEWS ROUNDUP

Date for Wrens to join warships

Women are to go to sea on Royal Navy warships for the first time later this year, the Government is to announce next month (Ray Clancy writes). Ministers have won a fierce battle with admirals over the issue.

It is expected that about 1,500 of the 3,400 shore-based Wrens will take up the opportunity. They are likely to become radio and computer operators, stewards and possibly weapons officers and radar operators.

Whitehall sources indicated last night, however, that the arguments were far from over. The admirals are worried about the effect on morale and discipline.

However, Mr Archie Hamilton, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, recently visited a Dutch navy ship where women have been serving since 1981.

He was told that women are, if anything, more efficient at communications and computer operation than men and that fears about sexual tension had proved unfounded.

Secrecy battle, page 4

Purley rail crash trial

The driver of the express train involved in the crash at Purley, Surrey, in which five people died was yesterday committed for trial at the Central Criminal Court. Robert Morgan, aged 47, of Farring, West Sussex, faces two manslaughter charges and one of endangering lives. More than 80 people were hurt in the crash on March 4 last year.

Mr Morgan was remanded on unconditional bail by Croydon magistrates until the hearing, on a date to be fixed. He is accused of the unlawful killing of Mr Colin Albert Clark and of Mr Eric Simpson.

No strangers to drugs

Many children in Liverpool have a "street wise" knowledge of drug taking, pointing out dealers near their schools to teachers, a schools inspectors report said yesterday (David Tyler writes). The report into health education in 10 Liverpool primary schools said pupils often found discarded hypodermic syringes. "It is unfortunate that all schools provide education about drugs and it is unfortunate that some schools are deterred from this by a fear that such provision might imply to parents that the school itself has a problem with children using drugs," the report said.

Cigarette brands to go

The tobacco manufacturer John Player is to end production of six of its top-selling brands, including such famous names as Gold Leaf and No 6.

Imperial Tobacco, the parent company, blames a slump in sales. The lines to go are Gold Leaf, No 6 King Size and No 6 Filter, No 10, and John Player Kingsize, both ordinary and low tar. John Player, based in Nottingham, will continue to produce three brands: Superkings, John Player Special and Players Navy Cut. Imperial Tobacco said: "These days the sales of the six brands are fairly small."

TV appointments

The Government yesterday made two further appointments to the Independent Television Commission, which will allocate licences to all television channels under plans to shake up broadcasting (Richard Ford writes). Professor Sean Fulton, senior pro vice-chancellor at Queen's University, Belfast, and Mr Pranjali Sethi, a barrister, join Mr George Russell, Lord Chalfont, Lady Popplewell and Professor James Ring as members of the commission, which was set up in shadow from January 1, this year.

Health care helpers

New, unqualified support workers are to start working in the health service this summer, initially in areas where there are high vacancy rates for professionally qualified nurses (Jill Sherman writes). Mr Duncan Nichol, NHS chief executive, said that the new "health care assistants" would help with general patient care, leaving the most highly trained staff to concentrate on clinical care. The move is designed to help to overcome an expected fall in the number of students entering professional nurse training in the 1990s.

MEPs attacked for 'interfering' in dispute

By Tim Jones and Peter Guillard

Conservative MPs reacted furiously last night to an attempt by the European Parliament to "interfere" in the ambulance dispute.

As union leaders were faced with mounting pressure to hold a ballot for an all-out strike, the MEPs passed an emergency motion tabled by the Strasbourg Parliament's socialist group and the independent Rainbow coalition which called on the British Government to "recognize the need for independent binding arbitration" to quickly end the dispute.

The socialist-dominated Parliament voted 105 to 45 to send a resolution to the Government blaming the deadlock over the dispute wholly on its "refusal to countenance

the introduction of an automatic pay-fixing system to settle future wage demands."

The resolution, initiated by the British Labour group, marks the first big attack on Mrs Margaret Thatcher by the 180-strong socialist group since she rejected the Social Charter at the EC summit in December. The emergency resolution mentions Mrs Thatcher's lone stand against the charter, saying: "The Government's opposition to the maintenance of basic workers' rights has resulted in the erosion of UK labour law."

Mr Jonathan Aitken, Conservative MP for Thanet South, said: "Whatever the rights and wrongs of the dispute it is no business whatever of the European Parliament to start interfering in a matter which is entirely the

responsibility of the domestic sovereign Parliament."

Mr Teddy Taylor, Tory MP for Southend East, said: "This has no relevance whatsoever other than being a mark of frustration at their lack of power. If the European Parliament closed down tomorrow no one would notice."

With no sign of an end to the dispute, more crews walked out on strike yesterday despite pleas by union leaders to maintain a basic 999 service.

In London, the strike spread as two more crews joined colleagues at Tottenham who have been on unofficial strike since Tuesday. London Ambulance Service denied union claims that they were anticipating an all-out strike by removing vital medical equipment

from ambulances. Nupc officials alleged that management personnel had visited more than 30 stations to remove the equipment.

Crews in stations in West Sussex also remained on strike as union leaders tried to prevent their colleagues in Manchester from taking similar action. In Wales, crews in South Glamorgan warned they would set up their own alternative emergency service unless managers restored full pay to all employees.

And in Clwyd, ambulancemen were planning a 24-hour strike which could lead to the Army being called in.

Both sides were urged to return to the negotiating table by the Church of Scotland. A statement said no dispute, "however important", was worth jeopardizing lives.

Ford workers split on vote for national wage strike

By Kevin Eason, Motoring Correspondent

Ford's 32,000 workers could be split over whether to call a national strike as the company's most skilled blue-collar workers demand bigger rises. Ford believes that the pay offer, which has been criticized by government ministers, may win acceptance from assembly line workers in secret ballots starting on Tuesday.

The assembly workers, the biggest single group making up a third of the hourly-paid workforce, have been offered an extra 3 per cent on a basic 10.2 per cent offer for the first stage of a two-year agreement. The second year will bring at least 8 per cent, making up rises of £41 a week.

However, skilled maintenance workers, who provoked a series of wildcat disputes this week, look certain to hold out for more in an effort to boost differentials over unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

They are also angry at Ford plans to introduce special manufacturing teams of key groups of workers, who will receive rises of 20.2 per cent in return for training to operate high-technology equipment.

The special teams will get only 30 days training, they claim, undermining the key position of skilled technicians and craftsmen.

The Government voiced regret last night at the Ford workers' action as ministers intensified their warnings against inflation.

Mr Richard Ryder, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, told the Commons that industry had more to fear from inflation and high pay

awards than from interest rates. He was replying to Mr Andrew Mackay, Conservative MP for Berkshire East, who spoke of disappointment at the Ford offer and its "irresponsible rejection" by the unions. Mr Ryder said excessive pay awards ultimately caused unemployment unless they were matched by increases in productivity.

Mr John Major, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said that productivity was vital to competitiveness and the opening up opportunities for investment, jobs and prosperity.

Union anger was underlined at Ford's plant at Halewood, Merseyside, where a three-day unofficial strike continued yesterday, halting production of 1,100 Escorts and Orion.

The main Dagenham plant was back to normal after a 24-hour wildcat strike timed to coincide with pay negotiations in London on Wednesday. At Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan, 1,500 workers voted to return to work today.

The Halewood action takes the company's losses from wildcat strikes this week to nearly £60 million. More than 400 craftsmen at Merseyside have caused the lay-off of 6,000 production workers in their protest over the special teams programme.

The results of the ballot will be announced next Thursday. A strike vote will mean the shutdown of Ford's 21 British plants from the last shift on Friday night in a repeat of the damaging strike two years ago.

Head defends Muslim scarves

CHIRPS GLEAVE



Muslim pupils wearing traditional headscarves yesterday at Cheetham Church of England community school in Manchester. Mr Paul Barnes, the headmaster, said it was ridiculous of governors at Altrincham girls grammar school, in Trafford, Manchester, to suspend two Muslim sisters aged 15 and 14 since the start of term for wearing the scarves.

Hospital baby snatch re-enacted

By Ruth Gledhill

A bogus health worker who snatched a three-day-old baby girl from a south London hospital last week was stopped and questioned by a doctor on her way out, police disclosed yesterday.

The woman, who called herself "Christine", was stopped as she was leaving by the fire escape by a doctor concerned at the age of the baby she was carrying.

She told him it was two weeks' old, was reluctant to talk further and left, police said.

Yesterday, a police press officer played the part of

"Christine" in a reconstruction of the abduction of baby Alexandra Griffiths.

Miss Caroline Taylor, who bears a close resemblance to the bogus health worker who took Alexandra from St Thomas's Hospital, twice re-enacted the crime, in which a real baby was not used, exactly one week after the original abduction.

Police hope the reconstruction will jog the memory of someone who might have seen the abduction. Miss Dawn Griffiths, the baby's mother, had declined to take part.

Miss Taylor wore a beige

raincoat, cream blouse, brown skirt, gold necklace and high heel dark leather shoes, the clothes police believe that "Christine" was wearing.

She went first to the Haydon Ward on the seventh floor, where the bogus health worker had chatted with Patricia and Keith Hocking, whose baby escaped her attention because he was in a special care unit.

Like "Christine", Miss Taylor then went down the fire escape staircase to the Grovesnor Ward on the sixth floor, from where Alexandra was abducted.

She left with a carrycot nest

in her arms. This was decorated with blue and yellow elephants and teddy bears, similar to the one "Christine" was believed to be carrying.

Detective Superintendent John Bassett, leading the inquiry, said that in spite of more than 1,500 calls to the police, the inquiry had made little progress.

He criticized hoaxers whose calls have sent officers to dozens of false addresses.

He urged doctors, milkmen, and baby shop staff to be on the alert for any unusual or suspicious orders or purchases.

Student loans may go private

By Nick Wood and Sam Kiley

Ministers have not abandoned hopes of persuading the private sector to run the Government's student loans scheme, it emerged yesterday, in the wake of the disclosure that the Prime Minister was "fizzing with fury" at the last-minute refusal of High Street banks to administer the service.

Ministers believe that once the system is running it will be possible, after the next election, to sell the loans company to the highest bidder.

Although they deny that Mrs Thatcher threatened the banks with "retribution" they believe there would be poetic justice in a state concern, salvaged from the banks' withdrawal, giving rise to a private sector challenge to their hold on the student market.

Meanwhile, Mr Robert Jackson, Under Secretary of State for Education and Science, said the word "retribution" had not been used by Mr John MacGregor, his Secretary of State, when conveying Mrs Thatcher's feelings to Sir John Quinton, chairman of Barclays.

Hong Kong resettlement Ministers resist calls to defer nationality plans

By Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent

The Government resisted Conservative demands last night to defer its Hong Kong nationality package in the wake of China's suggestion that British passport holders would not be eligible for consular protection after 1997.

Ministers and officials denied suggestions that the Chinese stance had scuppered the proposals to grant British citizenship to the families of 50,000 key residents.

Government sources said it was a nonsense to suggest that the Chinese statements, about which ministers are seeking urgent clarification, would destroy the basis of the scheme, which was designed to give confidence to people to remain in Hong Kong.

However, Mr Steven Norris, chairman of the Conservative backbench home affairs committee, said the Chinese attitude undermined what the Government had been told by its own supporters - that the scheme was not practical.

"The time has come to put

the scheme on ice. It should be deferred. The scheme itself is inadequate and not popular."

Mr Norris said: "The Government should treat this as a long-term and not a short-term issue. The next five or six years - not months - should be concentrated on persuading the Chinese that Hong Kong is of as much commercial value to them as to Britain. China must recognize the need for action which will restore confidence in the colony."

Sir Hal Miller, Conservative MP for Bromsgrove, said that the Chinese attitude was not surprising. "China will not recognize two passports. That is why I was among those who tried to persuade the Government not to make this nationality announcement," he said.

Foreign Office sources said Hong Kong residents granted British citizenship would retain their Hong Kong residence under the agreement between the two countries. They would have the right to

consular protection, as did all British citizens abroad.

It has always been part of the agreement that Hong Kong residents who aspired to high public posts after 1997 would take Chinese nationality. British sources said these were the people who would have to make a choice between British and Chinese nationality. The big majority of those included in the package would be no difficulty.

Mr Hurd has been warmly praised by MPs for the way he handled his Hong Kong visit.

There is growing confidence that the nationality package will get through the Commons, particularly with a number of Labour MPs apparently determined to defy their leadership and to refuse to vote with Conservative rebels.

Sir Hal said yesterday: "I take no pleasure in it, but all the things I said were going to happen are happening. There has been a lot of naivety over this."

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Airlines back BA on aviation policy

By Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent

The world's airlines were yesterday sent details of a British plan to take aviation policy decisions out of government hands in an effort to end the congestion threatening to strangle the industry.

Years of frustration at the failure of governments to provide adequate facilities to enable airlines to provide a better service were brought into the open this week when Sir Colin Marshall, British Airways chief, demanded the creation of an international task force to tackle the crisis.

His comments were circulated to all 187 members of the International Air Transport Association, who immediately backed his

initiative. Sir Colin told aviation experts in New York that governments could no longer cope with the complexity of the problems and that unless these were tackled on a global basis the industry would be strangled over the next 10 years.

He called for large international airlines from Europe, the US, the Far East and Australasia to form a non-profit, industry-wide body which would enlist influential people to find a way out of the crisis, determine what needs to be done and put pressure on governments to act in a united way. "We cannot just sit there and let outside circumstances destroy our business efforts."

Dry, cracked, chapped hands and lips?

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Kidneys-for-sale hearing

Doctor weeps as he admits 14 years of unethical surgery

By John Young

A surgeon admitted yesterday that all the kidney donor operations he had carried out in the past 14 years had been performed unethically.

Mr Michael Joyce said he was "sad, sorry and miserable" and would never perform any such operations again.

Mr Joyce, a urologist at Guy's Hospital, south London, told the General Medical Council that he had believed he was doing a good job. But after listening to the views expressed to the hearing on doctors' ethical responsibilities, he realized he had been cutting corners.

At one point, he broke down in tears when asked how he had felt listening to Turkish kidney donors giving evidence to the inquiry last month. "Dreadful," he replied, sobbing. He described their testimony as "horror on horror. I felt dirty," he said. The suffering that they had gone through appeared to be for no good reason. It was an appalling story.

Mr Joyce is one of three doctors charged with professional misconduct in relation to alleged payments to kidney donors. The others are Dr Raymond Crockett, a kidney specialist, and Mr Michael Bewick, a transplant surgeon.

All three have so far denied the charges, but yesterday Mr Joyce admitted seven of the eight charges against him.

The charges were that he removed kidneys from four live donors, Mr Ferhat Usta, Mr Ahmet Koc, Mrs Hatice Anilkan and Mr Coskun Yenici, and that in each case he failed to establish that financial or other improper inducements had not been made; whether the patient and recipient had a close and enduring relationship; the circumstances in which the patient's kidney was being provided; that the patient understood the risks; to procure a freely-given consent in writing, and to discuss the proposed operation beforehand with the patient.

An eighth charge that he acquiesced in the sale of human organs was changed to one that he unwittingly took part in the sale, which he also accepted.

Under questioning from his counsel, Mr John Goldring, QC, Mr Joyce said he did not know why the four donors

were giving their kidneys or that money was changing hands. "Had you known, would you have performed these nephrectomies?" "No."

He had been misled by Dr Bewick. "The only reason I did it was as a technician. I was looked upon as a worthwhile technician, and I took pride in that."

"I feel I have been exposed and let down by other colleagues who knew what I was doing and who have even tried to persuade me to do things while I have been waiting to come here."

He had been doing operations all over the South-east for 16 years, not just by arrangement with Mr Bewick



Mr Michael Joyce: "I was let down by my colleagues."

but with other surgeons who must have known much more than he about transplant ethics.

Mr Joyce said he did not take either *The Lancet* or *The British Medical Journal* and had been unaware of guidelines issued by the Transplantation Society, an international body set up to discuss ethical questions, and by the British Transplantation Society, but after listening to evidence from Mr Robert Ross-Taylor, former president of the British society, he realized his approach had been unethical.

"I never felt it before I came here," he said. "I felt I was doing a good job." He had never felt himself to be "in the transplantation scene"; his colleagues, he was ashamed to say, saw him as a mere assistant. "I should not have been."

Mr Joyce said that in 1985 he removed a kidney from a living Indian woman and Mr Bewick transplanted it into

another patient. They discovered afterwards the woman's kidney had been sold by her broker husband for the price of an alarm clock. Mr Bewick was "horrified" when he learned the truth.

Mr Goldring asked: "Did you think he would ever allow it to happen again if he could prevent it?"

Mr Joyce replied: "He would not allow it to happen again."

Mr Roger Henderson, QC, counsel for the GMC, suggested Mr Joyce should have taken the 1985 case as a warning, and Mr Joyce agreed that all the ethical problems stemmed from the fact the surgeon did not view the donors as his own patients.

"Once you realize that it is your patient, it transforms your attitude, doesn't it?" Mr Henderson asked. "Totally," he replied.

Mr Joyce admitted that he seldom, if ever, looked at the notes and reports on patients before operating. His notes on the operations became shorter as time went on, and by 1988 were probably only a rough diagram. He had made none at all in the case of the four Turkish donors, leaving the task to his anaesthetist.

Mr Joyce, aged 46, said that Mr Bewick — whom he met at Guy's — had charisma, was enthusiastic about everything and had boundless energy. "His commitments to his patients and to his work impressed me unbelievably," Mr Joyce said.

Together, they had carried out live donor operations at hospitals in Brighton, Dulwich and Carshalton. At first he was nervous, but also felt proud and excited.

He would see patients only "just before" the operation and sometimes they would already be under anaesthetic. He admitted that had he been asked who a particular kidney had come from or who it was going to, he would not have known; although he would have assumed a relationship between the donor and recipient.

Mr Joyce said he knew Dr Crockett by reputation before he met him; but had never visited the National Kidney Centre in north London, and in all, the doctors met only half a dozen times.

The hearing continues today.

Actors say farewell to Jackson



Top left, Rona Anderson, widow of Gordon Jackson, the actor, who died of cancer aged 66, with Jean Marsh, who appeared with him in *Upstairs, Downstairs*, at his funeral at the actor's church of St Paul's, Covent Garden, central London, yesterday. Above, Robert Flemyng (left) and Sir Alec Guinness. Pannine Collins and her daughter carry flowers.

Police divided over national unit

By Stewart Tindler
Crime Correspondent

Chief constables were split yesterday over the concept of setting up a national detective force to investigate top level criminals.

A meeting of the country's senior officers put back a decision on a blueprint for a national unit drawn up by a chief constables' working party and decided to delay a decision until more detailed work has been done on how such a unit should work.

Eventually a national unit could be set up using seconded officers working through a regional network, or the chief constables could decide to continue

using the existing regional crime squad system, adding a larger London component.

The idea of a national criminal investigation unit was first floated last year by Sir Peter Imbert, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. In the autumn the Association of Chief Police Officers decided it would examine setting up the unit and explore the idea of a national investigation unit to provide an operational arm.

At yesterday's meeting, the chief constables gave their support for the intelligence unit which has been the association's policy for some time but they want more work on the blueprint for the operational arm. There are questions

over its funding, accountability, and the relationship between such a unit and local forces.

After the meeting Mr John Dellow, president of the association and Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, said he was delighted that "we are still in the business of looking at a very important subject".

The model proposed yesterday would have included about 2,500 officers who would investigate both national and international crime such as drug trafficking, criminal gangs and international syndicates. The unit would play a key role in Britain's liaison with other countries over policing after internal frontiers are relaxed in the EC in 1992.

Tebbit to pay damages to Keays

By Michael Horsnell

Mr Norman Tebbit, the former Conservative Party chairman, agreed to pay substantial libel damages yesterday to Miss Sara Keays, the former mistress of his ex-Cabinet colleague Mr Cecil Parkinson.

He agreed in the High Court to pay an undisclosed amount over unfounded allegations in his autobiography *Upwardly Mobile*, published in 1988, that she had broken an undertaking not to comment on the relationship.

Miss Keays also gained agreed undisclosed damages yesterday over a *Daily Express* article the same year claiming she arranged for the press to be present when her daughter, by Mr Parkinson, left hospital after a brain operation, to obtain publicity to avenge herself on the minister.

Mr Michael Jones, political editor of *The Sunday Times*, was given a public apology and "substantial" undisclosed libel damages by *Private Eye* yesterday over an article implying he abused his position to secure a work permit for a journalist.

Mr Roger Carroll was awarded £6,000 damages over allegations in *The Sunday Times* that he "walked out" of his job as personal finance editor on the *Sunday Telegraph* after the announcement of its merger with *The Daily Telegraph*.

PORTFOLIO

Winner to share her good luck

The winner of yesterday's £2,000 Portfolio Platinum prize was Mrs Christa Weber, of Thetford in Surrey.

She said she was "absolutely delighted" with her good fortune, although according to the terms of a long-standing agreement, she will share the money with her three children.

"One of them is a student, and the other two are setting up homes, so it will be very useful to them," she said.

"My own share will be spent on a new driver to enhance my golf. I've been playing twice a week at a local club for the past four years, and until now have been getting nowhere fast."

Bacteria scare

Listeria found in Plumrose ham

By Richard Duce

Plumrose, one of Britain's largest producers of cooked meats, has suspended production of sliced Danish hams after sample tests disclosed high levels of listeria bacteria.

The firm, based in King's Lynn, Norfolk, yesterday advised all consumers recognized as "vulnerable" to the bacteria, including pregnant women, not to eat five types of vacuum-packed sliced ham if they have a best-before date of February 15, 1990, or earlier.

An estimated 20,000 4oz packs of ham, valued at £18,000, left the Plumrose factory before high levels of the listeria strain monocytogenes were disclosed in tests last Friday.

The advice applies to D-shaped Plumrose 113gm (4oz) Smoked Ham, Cooked Ham and Honey Cured Ham, and 113gm Family Choice Cooked Ham and Honey Cured Ham.

Production and distribution of the hams, produced from imported Danish meat, were

suspended last Friday and the firm has asked retailers to return supplies.

Environmental health officers, who make random checks on food production, identified one shop sample of Plumrose which proved listeria positive, further checks disclosed another and that led to an investigation by the Government-run Public Health Laboratory.

Its analysts found that 13 out of 15 samples from a Plumrose distribution warehouse contained listeria, some to an unacceptably high level.

Plumrose has launched its own checks to determine how the ham became infected during production.

Mr Stan Shreeve, managing director of Plumrose, part of the Copenhagen-based multinational East Asiatic Company, said: "The measures we have taken are purely precautionary, to reassure customers. There have been no cases of listeriosis linked to our

products." The advice not to eat the hams applies only to consumers recognized by the Department of Health as being vulnerable.

Those are pregnant women and those with impaired resistance to infection, including transplant patients, those on drugs which depress the immune system and those with leukaemia or cancers of the lymphatic tissues. The elderly are only considered at risk if their immune system is low.

The alert is the latest in a line of listeria-related food scares. Last summer, a Department of Health survey found that 10 per cent of all pâté was contaminated with listeria.

It can be destroyed by cooking and the danger lies in ready-to-eat foods such as soft cheeses and pre-cooked meats where the food is open to post-process contamination.

In 1987 there were 259 notified cases of listeriosis. That rose to 291 in 1988 and

provisional figures for 1989 show 247 cases. In 1988 11 people died from listeriosis. No published death figures are available for 1989.

The Public Health Laboratory said: "Listeria is ubiquitous. Exposure to it is unavoidable. One in 20 people carry it in their gut. In pregnant women if they acquire the infection the effects can range from nothing to feverish flu like illness. It can cross the placenta where it then may affect the foetus."

The Department of Health said: "The firm has acted responsibly. Both the product withdrawal and the department's advice are precautionary measures. No cases of listeriosis have been linked to these products."

Plumrose also produces Chicken and Turkey Roll, Garlic Sausage, Danish Salami and Chopped Pork with Ham at King's Lynn. The alert does not extend to Plumrose tinned meats.

Microwave oven danger dismissed

By Libby Jukes

A leading toxicologist has dismissed Austrian claims that vulnerable infants could suffer brain damage, liver and kidney failure from drinking milk heated in microwave ovens. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food agreed yesterday that there was no cause for concern.

Dr Richard Cottrell, head of science at the Leatherhead Research Laboratory, which carries out food testing on behalf of industry and the Government, said it was "highly irresponsible" of scientists at Vienna University "to frighten the public on the basis of wholly inadequate evidence".

In a letter to *The Lancet*, published on December 9, the researchers claimed that abnormal chemical changes occurring in amino acids during microwave heating could lead proteins to attack rather than strengthen body cells.

Some paediatricians have warned parents not to heat

West Germany has denied reports that it plans to follow up its ban on British beef with restrictions on UK-produced sheep meat (Paul Wilkinson writes). However, the National Farmers' Union still asked Mr John Gummer, the Minister for Agriculture, yesterday to take the matter up at a meeting of European Community ministers next week. More than 20 per cent of British sheep are infected with scrapie, a brain disorder allied to "mad cow" disease, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, which has developed in British cattle.

formula milk in a microwave oven. However, the ministry said: "The study looked at extremes, using samples heated in sealed containers until they turned brown at temperatures in excess of 100C. The scientists conveniently forgot to mention that no changes occurred in samples subjected to normal heating."

Dr Cottrell said that had the claim been presented as a scientific paper, a professional referee would want to know what chemical changes took place during conventional cooking. "The sweep of the evidence is that microwaving is not fundamentally different as a physical process to infra-

red radiation. Everything is toxic, depending on how much of it you take."

The Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Electrical Appliances, representing the microwave industry, said: "It is not surprising that any sample of food or milk should change its structure when submitted to gross over-heating of the kind carried out in this test, whether this be through microwaving, boiling or other forms of direct heating."

The association said: "It is unlikely that manufacturers will wish to duplicate this particular test as it bears no resemblance at all to the way a microwave is used in the

domestic situation." Mrs Cecilia Norman, head of the London Microwave Cooking School and a member of the Microwave Association, said that the Austrian report was another attempt at "hell-raising" after the discovery in government tests last month that one third of microwave ovens failed to heat food thoroughly to 70C.

The dispute between farmers and food processors over responsibility for the source of listeriosis poisoning in food may soon be ended by new research (Pearce Wright writes).

Animal Diseases Research Association scientists at the Moredun Research Institute, Edinburgh, are perfecting a method for the biochemical fingerprinting of thousands of strains of the bacteria, *Listeria monocytogenes*, that endangers the life of unborn babies.

It should show clearly whether food contamination came from in the farm or was introduced in the factory, the scientists said.

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Judge rules against MoD's right to keep death reports secret

By David Saped

The Ministry of Defence's justification for keeping under wraps internal reports into accidents and deaths involving servicemen was "entirely rejected" by a High Court judge yesterday.

Mr Justice Popplewell's judgment was made in a test case brought by the widow of a Naval airman who died after a drinking bout at a British training base in Norway where off-duty drunkenness was regarded as the norm.

It opens the way for the publication of the hitherto secret reports and could lead to actions for damages against the ministry by injured servicemen and by families of those who have died.

Mr Paddy Ashdown, Liberal Democrat leader, had campaigned for Mrs Dawn Barrett, one of his Yeovil constituents, to see the MoD's board of inquiry report into her husband's death two years ago. He hailed the ruling as "a step in the right direction for freedom of information" which could give Mrs Barrett a chance to discover the truth about her husband's death.

Mrs Barrett's application to have access to the full report

before instituting legal action over the death of Naval Airman Terence Barrett was rejected by the judge.

He ruled she already had sufficient evidence to initiate a claim against the ministry. Her solicitors, the London firm of Stewarts, did so immediately after the ruling, seeking a six-figure sum.

Crucially, however, the judge went on to rule against a submission by Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Defence, that board reports should continue to enjoy their traditional secrecy on the grounds of "public interest immunity". The ruling meant that Mrs Barrett could take steps to see the report after the serving of a writ for damages.

Mr Justice Popplewell said: "I entirely reject the contention that, unless these [board of inquiry] proceedings are privileged, there will be a lack of candour [by servicemen giving evidence to a board]. Nor do I agree that the absence of confidentiality will affect the proceedings."

The judge also rejected the ministry's contention that publication of reports could endanger morale, discipline or

safety. He said that, barring overriding technical or national security reasons, the reports should be published.

Mrs Barrett, aged 29, said afterwards that she hoped she would now be able to see the full, 260-page report into her husband's death. Initially, the ministry offered her a two-page summary and, later, one running to 15 pages.

She said after the judgment: "The ruling was very positive and I am hopeful I will, finally, get to know the full circumstances of my husband's death."

The MoD said last night: "We are considering the implications of the judgment."

After Mr Barrett's death, at the court martial of the officer commanding the base at Bardufoss, it was said that excessive drinking had been a normal feature of life.

On the evening of Mr Barrett's death, as he celebrated his 30th birthday, between 20 and 25 senior ratings drank 24 litres of vodka and other drinks. Mr Barrett choked on vomit. The commanding officer was severely reprimanded for failing to "discourage drunkenness"

Monroe look, 90s style, in new Bus Stop

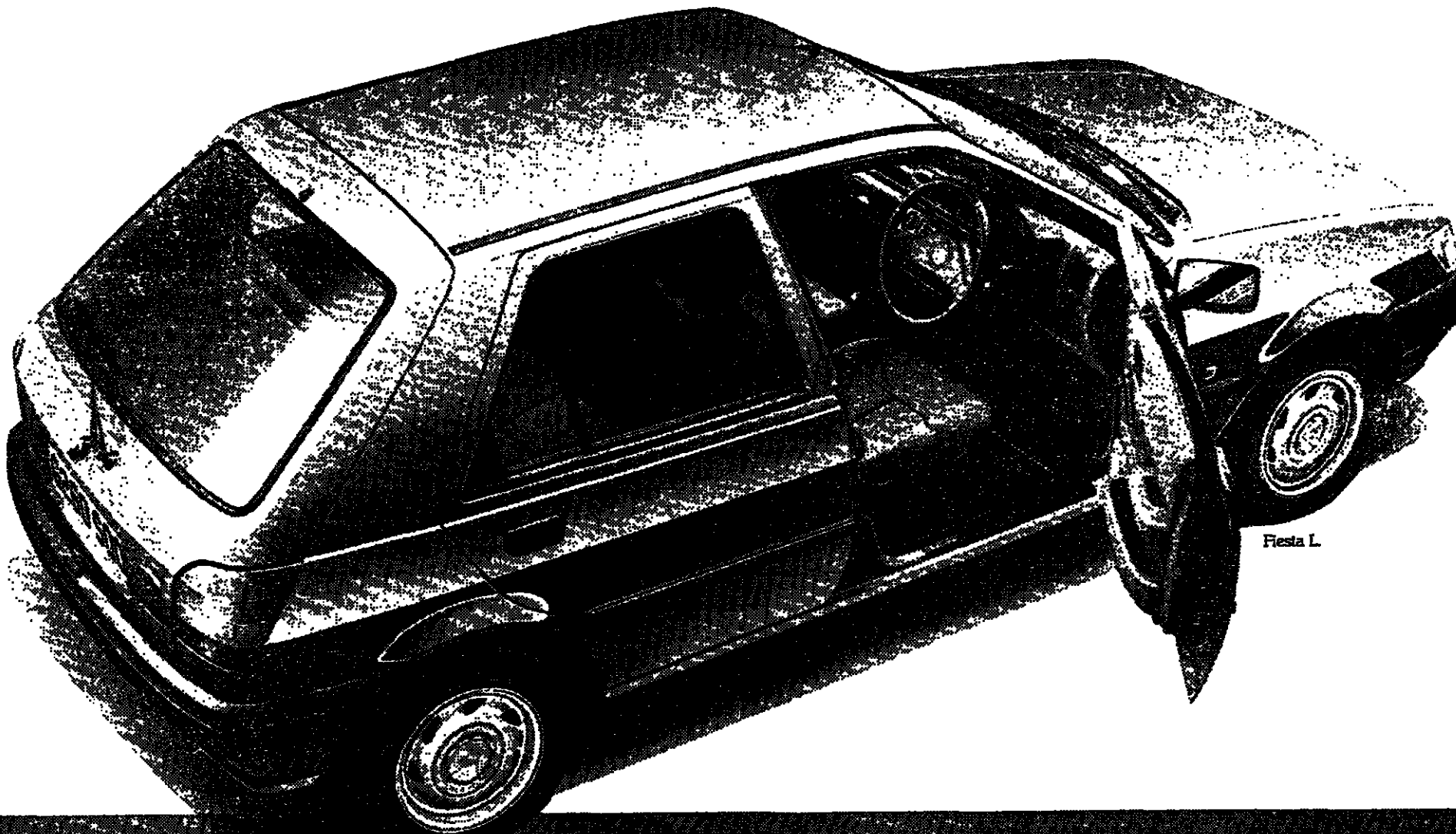
GRAHAM WOOD



Jerry Hall and Shann Cassidy, who will make their British stage debuts next month in the William Inge play, *Bus Stop*, at the Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, with (right) Marilyn Monroe and Don Murray as they appeared in the same roles in the film version of the play, first staged on Broadway in 1955.



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Charge for Credit	£122.28	£131.48	£150.56
Total Credit Price	£7042.28	£8247.48	£9434.56
8.9% (17.0% APR)			
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*Maximum retail prices as at January 2nd 1990 including delivery. Delivery is to dealer premises with exception of Channel Islands and Isle of Wight when a further charge will be made.

Finance Plans end February 15th.



هكذا من الأصل

Fate of 'Three Graces' seen as export rule test

Confidence in Britain's system for protecting items of supreme heritage importance against export will collapse if Canova's sculpture "The Three Graces" is lost abroad, according to a report published yesterday.

The 20-page document, *Save the Woburn Canova*, contains impassioned pleas by an impressive number of art world grandees. It is published by SAVE Britain's Heritage and the art magazine *Apollo*. The sculpture seems likely to go to the Getty Museum in the US after March 12.

The report says Antonio Canova is one of the greatest of all sculptors to be "ranked with Praxiteles, Donatello, Michelangelo, Bernini and Rodin and 'The Three Graces' is internationally recognized as one of his finest works".

Professor Sir Ernst Gombrich says in the document that if the work, which was commissioned by the 6th Duke of Bedford for Woburn Abbey in 1815, was allowed to be exported, "future generations will never forgive us". Sir John Julius Norwich comments that it would be a tragedy if it were to leave.

Mr Jonathan Scott, chairman of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art, and until now a supporter of the free trade system, calls it a "test case" for Britain's export controls. "If such an important work of art as 'The Three Graces' is lost, it is hard to argue that we have sufficient confidence in our system to prefer it to other countries as a model for 1992."

Until now, he adds, our system, of temporary stops - which give museums opportunities to match the prices of works of art - has been perhaps the fairest in Europe; but if a sculpture of such quality and significance is allowed to go abroad, he

argues, the system will have failed.

Only if our museums were to be "properly funded and if the 'indefinite stop' were to be reinstated" could the UK system be "proposed as a basis for other EC countries".

The record price for a work by the Edwardian artist Charles Spence (1865-1958) passed the £100,000 mark at Sotheby's in Chester, when a fastidiously painted picture of a clockmaker fetched £112,200. It was more than four times the previous record for his work.

The painting, entitled "Time on his hands", shows an elderly craftsman tinkering lovingly with a pocketwatch.

SALEROOM
Art Market
by Sarah Jane Checkland
Correspondent

on a table. Behind him hang various dismembered clocks, and a sign saying "A. Spring, Watch and Clock Maker".

Bought from the artist by a Liverpool industrialist shortly after it was painted in the 1940s, it was yesterday sold by his son to a Liverpool businessman, who was bidding in the room.

He prevailed in a battle against a big London dealer who was bidding by telephone. The businessman's wife began the bidding, but soon lost her nerve, whereupon he took over.

"I thought I might have stuck my neck out too far by estimating £30,000 to £50,000," said Sotheby's specialist, Mr Martin Gallon, said. "How wrong I was."

Mr Gallon warned owners of other Spence works not to be too excited about the price. "This painting was unique," he said, although it made Spence "one of the recognized Victorian artists".

RIBA award for primary school

By Charles Knevit, Architecture Correspondent

An innovative primary school building in Birmingham has received the first annual Building of the Year Award from the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Designed by Mr Will Howland, of Birmingham City Architects Department, the Nelson Mandela community primary school blends with neighbouring semi-detached houses with its traditional appearance.

Inside, however, there are no corridors or conventional classrooms but spaces which flow into one another, only divided by sliding screens and doors. This allows staff to combine supervisory and teaching functions.

At the awards dinner last night at the Institute's headquarters in Portland Place, west London, Mr Max Hutchinson, RIBA president, said he had selected it from 16 award-winning buildings.

"The architecture of most school buildings makes a point of imposing authority. This building is not full of no-go areas. It is concerned with what children can do rather than what they cannot do. The

response of the pupils is a credit to the teaching staff and Mr Howland."

The National Awards jury commented: "In spite of gloomy predictions there is not a hint of vandalism, a sure sign of the affection that this place has won with the community it serves."

A £6.5m plan to restore the historic Royal Pump Rooms at Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, to include both private and NHS medical treatment, was unveiled yesterday (Craig Seton writes).

Warwick District Council, which owns the freehold on the building, said that the scheme was intended to improve and enhance the pump rooms.

Conservation groups had claimed that plans to develop the site as a private health clinic would destroy the historic facade of the building. However, Mr Michael Ward, chief executive of Warwick District Council, said that the scheme put forward by Professional Parks Ltd, of Newcastle Upon Tyne, would involve rebuilding only at the rear of the pump rooms.

Cashing in on green boom

Advertisers alerted over inaccurate environment claims

By Richard Evans, Media Editor

Advertisers were warned yesterday not to make unwarranted environmental claims about products in an attempt to cash in on the "green" consumer boom.

Agencies and clients which made over-optimistic assessments of goods left themselves open to counter-attack from rival manufacturers and environmental activists as well as annoying shoppers, the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers said.

The advice, in a guide for advertisers about environmental claims, comes in the wake of well-publicized cases of manufacturers being reprimanded for making wildly inaccurate claims about the supposed environmental advantages of their products.

The Advertising Standards Authority, which is monitoring the new advertising trend, disclosed in its latest case report this week that it is continuing to receive public complaints about a number of businesses over the presentation of their "green claims".

Friends of the Earth re-

cently made "Con of the Year" awards to advertisers after complaints that a large number of companies were anxious to present a green image "even though their business activities may remain far from green".

British Nuclear Fuels was given the main award for an advertisement headlined: "Just how Green are you about Nuclear Power?" The runners-up were Higgs Furs, whose slogan stated: "Environmental Friendly furs by Higgs".

Car companies such as Audi, Volkswagen, Citroën, and Saab were highlighted for dubious "green" claims such as "harmless carbon dioxide".

Austin Rover, BP Oil UK and Citroën have also been reprimanded by the authority after complaints about advertisements.

The environmental sound-

ness of a company and its products is playing an ever-increasing role in shoppers' minds and can help provide an extra competitive edge in sales. The advertisers society,

which represents Britain's main advertisers, yesterday told companies of "the dangers that exist if environmental issues are unwisely used as the basis for promotional claims, seeking to appeal to consumers' altruistic nature".

Mr Ken Miles, director of the society, writing a foreword to the guide, said: "Advertisers and their agencies may believe that they can get a competitive advantage by incorporating an environmental claim; but they may not appreciate that in doing so they will leave themselves wide open to criticism from environmental activists and experts within rival companies, if their claims do not stand up to the closest scrutiny."

"This scrutiny and criticism may often be unfair or irrelevant, since it may draw attention to an environmental issue which relates to a totally different part of the company, or a totally different product."

"Nevertheless, this is the way in which activists and possibly competitors will work, and the ISBA want to make sure that companies recognize the dangers."

"These comments apply not only to advertising claims but also to claims on packs, remarks made in annual reports, company literature, sales promotion, and of course in public relations activities."

He added: "It is therefore essential that companies do think carefully about the down-side of environmental claims as well as about the possible advantages."

"Doubtful claims could lead to a cynical consumer attitude about advertising as a whole and to negative responses by government ministers who want industry to take environmental matters seriously."

Although the Government is planning proposals for legislation on environmental labelling this year, this will not cover advertising. The society has suggested the British Code of Advertising Practice and the Independent Broadcasting Authority's advertising code should include a new clause about environmental claims.

Prince Michael tries out Hyde Park ride



Prince Michael of Kent trying out the first section of the new East Carriage Ride in Hyde Park, London. With him are (from left) Captain Barry McKay, Mrs Basia Briggs, Lieut-Colonel Seymour Gilbert-Denham, Lieut-Colonel Dick Morrissey Paine and

Mr Richard Briggs. The King's Old Road - or Kotten Row - was constructed as a carriage drive 300 years ago, but a part was removed after the Second World War (Libby Jukes writes). Prince Michael is patron of the Hyde Park Appeal which

aims to provide a new bridleway between Hyde Park Corner and Marble Arch, to enable riders once more to make complete circuits of the park. Equestrian events this year culminate in London in September in a cavalcade of horses and carriages.

New teaching methods 'add to problems of dyslexics'

By Douglas Broom, Education Reporter

State schools were accused yesterday of compounding the problems of dyslexic children by the use of fashionable modern teaching methods.

The executive director of the British Dyslexia Association, Mr Michael Sterne, said that the National Curriculum, with its implicit endorsement of present methods, would only make matters worse.

Launching the 1990 Dyslexia Awareness Campaign, Mr Sterne said there was no evidence to justify the widely used system of teaching children to read by showing them whole words rather than individual letters.

The method known as "look-say", in which five-year-olds learn to recognize complete words, has largely supplanted approaches based on learning the sounds of letters which are then combined to spell words.

Mr Sterne said there was overwhelming evidence from research in Britain, the United States and France that children with dyslexia had difficulty relating the sounds made by letters to the symbols on the page. By reintroducing traditional methods, nine out of 10 dyslexic children could be taught to read and write normally, he said.

"Teaching reading should include teaching the ways in which letters and letter combinations correspond with sounds, known as the alphabetic principle," Mr Sterne said.

"There is not, to my knowledge, a single research study to support the view that the alphabetic principle should not be taught. On the contrary, there is overwhelming evidence that it should. The great

majority of children who fail to develop literacy do so because of problems relating sounds to words."

The association estimated that 32,000 dyslexic children started school each year to add to the total of 350,000 dyslexics already in the school system. Yet only 1,500 teachers were specially trained to help them.

The awareness campaign has the support of a number of distinguished dyslexics, including the former Cabinet Minister Mr Michael Heseltine, Jackie Stewart, the former world racing champion, and the actress Beryl Reid.

It marks the start of International Literacy Year and will involve displays about



Richard Rogers: Was told he was "daft and backward".



Duncan Goodhew: Went on to study at university.

dyslexia in 3,000 libraries, 1,000 Citizens' Advice Bureaux, more than 1,000 Job Centres and at W H Smith, Do-It-All and Our Price shops.

Speaking at the campaign launch, the Olympic swimmer Duncan Goodhew, a dyslexia sufferer, said he was branded "Duncan the Dunc" at prep school. Yet with proper coaching he went on to university in the United States to study business and economics. He said: "I was isolated as being stupid. If you are told something often enough you begin to believe it. It was very confusing and incredibly frustrating."

Mr Richard Rogers, the architect who designed the Lloyd's Building in London, said his parents had been told he was "daft, backward, incapable and unruly" because he suffered dyslexia.

When he asked staff about his career prospects he was told: "You are lazy, you are thick - what about the South African police?"

● School leavers are to be asked to help teachers run classes in schools facing one of the worst teacher shortages in the country. They would be paid about £90 a week pocket money and expenses.

Negotiations are taking place between Community Service Volunteers and the Borough of Tower Hamlets in east London, where about 400 children are still waiting to be admitted to primary schools because there is nobody to teach them.

● Schools wanting to set up small businesses were told yesterday that "the desire for profit could blinker students' learning".

The warning from the schools' inspectors came a day after Mr John MacGregor, Secretary of State for Education and Science, had launched a nation-wide scheme to encourage schools to run their own companies as part of the National Curriculum.

Inspectors had visited 60 schools, primary and secondary, to examine the "Mini-enterprise" scheme originally sponsored by the NatWest Bank in 1985, who gave loans of £50 to approved projects. Many of them had been successful but the inspectors say that few had a clear set of objectives and that insufficient consideration had been given to the consequences of some schemes.

Lifeguards threaten pollution boycott

Britain's lifeguards have threatened to stop patrolling beaches because of pollution.

The Surf Life Saving Association of Great Britain said yesterday its services will be withdrawn from shores where dirty water made volunteers ill. The organization's medical officers are testing seasides around the country for evidence of pollution.

The president, Mr Charles Thomson, said the association was checking reports of dysentery and skin disorders.

Blast survivor

A man aged 25 survived with burns and chest injuries after being blown from the third floor in an explosion at a tower block in Ramsgate, Kent. A gas leak is thought responsible.

Police help

The West Midlands police force has appointed its first full-time clergyman. Canon Barry Wright, an ex-chief inspector, will offer counselling to officers of all rank.

Found dead

Mrs Anne Eggleton, a senior nurse who ran the emergency unit at Princess Margaret Hospital, Swindon, Wiltshire, where many of the victims of the Hungerford massacre were taken, has been found dead at her home after inhaling exhaust fumes.

Wind abates

Faulty equipment was responsible for a "record" 161mph gust of wind recorded on Tuesday night in the Outer Hebrides, the Meteorological Office said.

Road-building opponents 'abusing public concern'

By Michael Dynes, Transport Correspondent

Concern about the environment is being "used and abused" to prevent much needed investment in new roads to ease congestion, Mr Peter Witt, director of the British Road Federation, said yesterday.

In an attack against the anti-road building lobby, Mr Witt said that the roads debate was "being conducted in a climate where reality and fact are too often relegated to the sidelines by hyperbole and disinformation".

He accused environmental groups such as Friends of the Earth, as well as transport academics, of proposing "ig-

norant and simplistic solutions" to transport problems, "which are unsustainable when critically examined".

Mr Witt blamed traffic congestion on the Department of Transport failing to forecast accurately the growth of traffic and to meet this with sufficient investment - although this was slowly being rectified.

Environmental groups, however, have argued that successive governments have locked themselves into big road-building programmes, which have encouraged wider car ownership to fill the amount of available road.

Challenging the environ-

mentalists' argument that road congestion could be reduced by transferring a large proportion of freight to rail, Mr Witt insisted that average freight journeys in Britain were under 50 miles, and therefore, uneconomic by rail.

Mr Witt agreed that more money should be invested in public transport, but he rejected environmentalists' calls to "restrict and discourage" vehicles.

"This is contrary to what people really want," he said. Friends of the Earth said Mr Witt did not understand that most people did not support new road schemes.

Archers village loses a round

By Craig Seton

A satellite village can be considered for a site at Hanbury, Hereford and Worcester, the rural community that inspired the fictional village of Ambleside in the BBC radio series *The Archers*, Mr Chris Patten, Secretary of State for the Environment, decided yesterday.

An action committee representing Hanbury villagers, which had hoped Mr Patten would block the proposed development of 1,000 homes, said last night that it was "devastated" by his decision.

The decision that a satellite village at Hanbury, near Droitwich, can be considered was contained in modifications proposed by Mr Patten to the Hereford and Worcester county structure plan, which were published yesterday.

Mr Patten said the alterations were aimed at providing a balance between the need for development and maintaining a strong green belt to preserve the environment.

Residents of Hanbury, with a population of 800, had claimed that a new village of more than 1,000 homes, including a golf course and other leisure developments, would destroy the community that had changed little for centuries.

Mr Michael Thompson, a leading member of the action

committee fighting the proposed development by William Davis Homes, of Loughborough, Leicestershire, and Barratts, of the West Midlands, said yesterday: "We have lost the first skirmish, but the fight goes on. People here are very angry at this devastating news."

Mr Thompson said that hopes of Mr Patten blocking the development had been raised when the Secretary of State ruled against a similar scheme proposed for Foxley Wood, Hampshire, which was also fiercely opposed.

He said: "Mr Patten has talked about leaving planning matters to local people. Well, there is no doubt what local people say. They do not want the damned thing. They do not want Hanbury to become part of suburbia."

The Hanbury action committee held an emergency meeting last night to consider its next move.

Mr Patten's modifications to the county structure plan will be subject to a six-week objection period. Hereford and Worcester County Council said yesterday that Mr Patten was expected to publish final proposals later in the year. If plans for a satellite village were included, the developers would be free to apply for planning permission.

Crufts to introduce terrier races

By Ruth Gledhill

Crufts, keen to shed its image as a sedate beauty contest for dogs, is to introduce terrier racing into this year's show, the last to be held in London.

The organizers of the show predicted "a bit of a riot" during the races, which will take place in the main ring on the second day of the show in three weeks' time.

Terriers, in heats of four, will be released from traps at one end of the ring.

A furry object, resembling a rat or a ferret, will be used to

lure them to the other end where their handlers will hide in rhododendron bushes to catch them at the finish.

Miss Barbara Banfield, show manager, said: "They have these races at agricultural shows in the north of England."

"The terriers go so fast you normally have to stop them with a bale of straw."

"We thought this would be a bit difficult and have decided to use rhododendrons instead."

She said there will not be

any official gambling on the results.

"I do not know what will go on unofficially," she said. "We thought it would be fun to show that dogs don't just look beautiful, they can do things as well."

"As long as they don't bite members of the audience I am not bothered what happens."

Major General Martin Sinnott, secretary of the Kennel Club, which organizes the show, said: "There will be terriers everywhere. Ringside

spectators could end up with terriers in their laps."

"It will be enormous fun."

The owner of the winning terrier will be presented with a silver salver.

Crufts moves to the National Exhibition Centre at Birmingham for its centenary show next year.

A total of 14,564 dogs have entered for this year's show, 550 more than last year.

The four-day show begins at Earl's Court, west London, on February 8.

Chelsea Flower Show

Organizers to trim crowd capacity

By Alan Toogood, Horticulture Correspondent

Crowd capacity at the Chelsea Flower Show in May is to be reduced to ensure that visitors enjoy a comfortable and enjoyable visit, the Royal Horticultural Society announced yesterday.

Capacity in the Royal Hospital grounds will be reduced to 190,000 over the show's four days and there will be no more than 20,000 visitors in the grounds at any time.

There will be two private view days for society members and tickets for the two public

days are being offered in advance. For the first time the society has appointed a ticket agency, Keith Prowse, to handle the sale of all public day tickets.

This year there will be more than 700 exhibitors at the show, and a new feature will be an advice centre for disabled and elderly gardeners. Children under five will not be admitted. There are facilities for handicapped people.

There is no booking fee for tickets bought from the agency

by postal application (to the Chelsea Flower Show ticket office, PO Box 1426, London, SW1) or for credit card bookings, (telephone 01-748 1414; all cards accepted).

The show's 24-hour information line (01-828 1744) is now in operation, and will continue for the duration of the show, giving ticket availability and admission details.

A charity gala preview of the show will be held on Monday, May 21, from 7 to 9pm. It will be sponsored by Enterprise

Oil and organized by Help the Aged and the society. Further details and tickets are available from Special Events Department, Help the Aged, St James's Walk, London EC1R 0BE (telephone 01-253 0253).

The private view, for members only, will be on Tuesday and Wednesday, 22 and 23 May, 8am-5pm. General admission is Thursday 24 May, 8am-5pm (£15 for the full day, £7 after 4pm), and Friday 25 May, 8am-5pm (£12).

Judge criticizes tardy barristers

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

A judge criticized barristers yesterday for wasting public money by not turning up on time.

In the latest of a series of complaints from the bench about barristers who are late for court, Judge Savill, QC, said at York Crown Court: "Everyday for the last two weeks I've been sitting here and not started on time. More than 200 minutes has been lost which is at public expense."

Applications have been made every day to give barristers more time "because it appears no one seems to be bothered to have their cases prepared in time to start promptly", the judge said.

He told Mr Richard Ough: "I am sorry you are taking the slack for the others but this is not the conduct I like to see from members of the Bar."

There has been an increasing number of complaints by judges about the failure of barristers to attend court on time for hearings, or, indeed, on occasion, to attend at all, according to Mr Richard Southwell, QC, writing in *Counsel* magazine.

Mr Southwell, chairman of the Bar's professional standards committee, says: "The committee is strongly of the opinion that there is no excuse, short of personal or

national disaster, for this kind of behaviour."

"Late-running trains, heavy traffic or the distance to be driven from home will not suffice."

"Even delays due to listing problems and over running cases in other courts can be minimized by counsel with careful planning and liaison with the listing room."

Mr Southwell also reports that his committee has been particularly worried by the number of complaints alleging failure to deal with papers within a reasonable time and also of the number regarding the late return of instructions as a result of "clashes of professional commitments", or double-booking.

The latter, he says, is of particular concern to the lay client who "objects to the appearance of a new barrister who, without his knowledge, turns up to represent him at the hearing."

"Both can cause nothing but harm to the public image of the Bar and, in the committee's view," he says. The problems over late return of briefs frequently arise from lack of liaison between barristers and their clerks, leading to more commitments being accepted than can realistically be met, Mr Southwell says.

Kremlin crisis talks urged to have faith in perestroika

Gorbachov rounds on hardliners and 'rabble'

From Michael Binyos, Moscow

President Gorbachov hit out at his conservative critics yesterday and vigorously attacked the "rabble" — all those who were "putting in their oar" to muddy perestroika and the process of moral rebirth. He also denounced those trying to halt democratization for their own ends.

He defiantly insisted that reform and perestroika were the only way forward as he faced virtual civil war in the Transcaucasus, a growing clamour for independence in the Baltic republics and an economy officially said to be in crisis.

Addressing a Kremlin meeting of workers and intellectuals hastily summoned from all over the country, the embattled Soviet leader said reforms had already begun to bear fruit, and the country had no choice but to continue its democratization and radical economic change.

"We simply cannot continue to live as we have done," he said. "We need perestroika as we need air. We need it to reveal the potential of our system."

He insisted the Soviet Union was not about to abandon communism, that his reforms had been forced by events and were essential to reveal the humane character of the system. Society had undergone a spiritual renaissance, he said, and built a new

moral atmosphere on the basis of universal human values.

Mr Gorbachov's fighting talk came as two conservative newspapers challenged his economic programme, criticizing perestroika as hasty and poorly thought out, and insisting that no reformist economist had yet found a scientific and properly reasoned programme to lead the country out of the present impasse.

One paper also strongly attacked strikes, accusing workers of holding the country to ransom and arguing that strikes were far more damaging in a communist system than in a market economy.

Mr Gorbachov admitted concern over the ethnic conflicts in the south — the worst fighting within the Soviet Union since the Nazi invasion in 1941. But he said the state had to use force against "extremists, vandals and criminals" in the region. The problem of inter-ethnic relations could only be solved by a new form of federation, as he suggested last week in his talks with nationalists in Lithuania.

To some extent the chaos in Armenia and Azerbaijan has helped deflect attention from the ailing economy, which many see as the greater challenge to the Soviet leader's authority.

The swift despatch of troops, the imposition of a

state of emergency and the unprecedented media coverage of the fighting have pre-occupied the nation and allowed Mr Gorbachov to wrap himself in the flag of national unity, in contrast to radicals who would break up the country amid bloodshed.

His position has been reinforced by general support from the rest of the world, including the specific endorsement of Soviet troop deployment in the Transcaucasus by the United States.

Mr Gorbachov is determined not to appear rattled, and to show the country that it is business as usual. He skilfully bought time in the Baltic republics by his visit to Vilnius and is now trusting to the military to contain the crisis in the south without putting his own reputation and authority on the line.

He has found time to meet Mr Shintaro Abe, the Japanese Foreign Minister, and on Tuesday he received Señor Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the United Nations Secretary-General. He also chaired meetings of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet to discuss the constitutional issues raised by Estonia and Lithuania and the next parliamentary session.

Mr Gorbachov realizes that he stands or falls by the performance of the economy. Until now this has been

lamentable and most economic indicators are pointing downwards. Inflation has risen, food shortages become acute and there have been power cuts in Moscow; joint ventures with the West are stagnating as businessmen wait for clarification of the vague laws on operating and co-operatives, intended to spur the revival of private industry, are widely hated as excuses for shady operators to become millionaires.

Both conservatives and liberals are dissatisfied and the attempt by Mr Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Prime Minister, to steer a middle course recently with his very cautious economic plans dismayed everyone, including foreign observers, by his lack of determination to get to grips with the crisis.

Many Soviet analysts suggest Mr Gorbachov has realized he will have to scrap the entire command system, with everything that entails for traditional communism. Mr Leonid Abalkin, his chief economic adviser, said in The Hague on Tuesday that Moscow should abolish state ownership of industry and create stock and commodity markets as part of the drive to rescue the economy.

Critics say the Soviet Union now has the worst of both worlds: neither a fully planned nor a market system.



An Armenian refugee, with serious head, arm and leg injuries after having been savagely tortured by Azerbaijanis, being flown to Yerevan following medical help in Krasnodar.

Islam in the Soviet Union

Rise of Muslim millions threatens empire in disarray

By Daniel Treisman

One of the stranger invitations President Gorbachov received in January 1989 came from the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who urged the Soviet leader to recognize the superiority of Islam to communism and send aides to study the Koran in the holy city of Qom.

Besides sarcastic smiles, it must have provoked an uneasy shiver. Islam, the religion of an estimated 55 to 60 million of the Soviet Union's 287 million inhabitants, remains an unknown and menacing factor amid the upsurge of national movements brought into the open by Mr Gorbachov's reforms.

As predominantly Shia Azerbaijanis clash with Christian Armenians over Nagorno-Karabakh, some analysts are wondering if so far localized explosions of discontent fuelled by a deteriorating ecological and economic crisis could link up into a tidal wave of Islamic unrest spreading across the Muslim regions.

"There is already a mental uprising against Soviet power throughout the south," says Amir Taheri, author of *Crescent in a Red Sky: The Future of Islam in the Soviet Union*. "A demonstration in support of the Azerbaijanis has taken place in the traditionally religious town of Osh in

Kirghizia, while the Azerbaijanis also enjoy the sympathy of religious leaders in Tajikistan, he said.

In parts of the Muslim republics, raids by local guerrillas imitating *basmachi* fighters who resisted Bolshevik rule in the 1920s have been reported, according to Taheri. The Russian authorities at first attributed an attack on a police post in Tajikistan to Afghan guerrillas who had infiltrated the border, he said; only later they realized it was the work of Tajik militants.

Shia Azerbaijanis can count on some sympathy across the border in Iran, where their cause will be the theme of today's prayer meetings. Hojatoleslam Sayed Ali Khomeini, the Islamic Republic's spiritual leader, departing from Iran's previously cautious reaction to the upheaval on its Soviet border, has attributed the disturbances to Islamic zeal. "These sentiments are Islamic and have their attractions for one billion Muslims worldwide," he said on Wednesday, according to Iran's IRNA news agency.

Western analysts, while expecting sporadic violence across the Soviet south as the region's chronic problems worsen, say the Islamic peoples are far too divided by historical conflicts, interests and strategies to unite and roll

back Soviet rule. From the Tatars and Karakalpaiks to the Uighurs and Ossetians, scores of Muslim peoples are scattered across the mountainous Transcaucasus and the plains of Central Asia with little in common except their religion and Soviet citizenship.

Last summer saw a flare-up of hostility between different Muslim nationalities, as Ta-

jiks clashed with Kirghiz over land and water rights, Kazakhs in Novy Uzen attacked shopowners from the Caucasus, and Uzbeks rampaged in a bloody pogrom against Meskhetian Turks in the Fergana Valley. Fleeing Meskhetians were reportedly welcomed in the Ashk region of Tajikistan by riots which left two dead.

Even in the near-civil war conditions of Nagorno-Karabakh, Muslim Kurds are siding with the Armenians against Muslim Azerbaijanis, according to Dr Shirin Akiner of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. The Azerbaijanis have traditionally identified more with Turkey than with the predominantly Sunni Mus-

lims of Central Asia, whom they have viewed at times scathingly as desert nomads.

Nationalist movements in the regions are splintered. With the recent split of the Uzbek movement *Harik*, none of the Muslim republics except Azerbaijan can boast a united popular-front movement like those in the Baltic.

Yet a growing ecological and economic crisis throughout the region promises to spark outbursts of xenophobia perceived to be in charge, especially Europeans from the north and west.

With the Aral Sea turning into a dustbowl of toxic salts as the result of decades of poor water management, millions of Central Asians are watching worriedly as their water supplies dry up.

"People are almost at the point of starvation and malnutrition," says Dr Akiner, just returned from a two-week visit to the region.

High birthrates along with dire unemployment — two million jobless in Uzbekistan alone — has created a young population which has less patience with corrupt local elites and more sympathy for radical Islamic appeals.

Muslims are frustrated by their lack of representation in high party organs.



RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Volga Tatars (also in most other republics), Chuvash, Bashkirs, Chechens, Ossetians, Kabardians, Ingush, Karachais, Adygues, Balkars, Cherkess, Abazins, Tatars, Kazakhs, Karakalpaiks, Avars, Lezgins, Darghins, Kumyks, Laks, Tabasarans, Nogais, Rutuls, Tsakhurs, Aguls, Persians, Azerbaijanis.

GEORGIA: Ossetians, Abkhazians, Kurds, Azerbaijanis.

TURKMENIA: Turkmen, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Karakalpaiks, Uighurs, Persians, Baluchis, Afghans, Kurds.

ARMENIA: Kurds, Azerbaijanis.

AZERBAIJAN: Azerbaijanis, Tatars, Kurds.

Bonn emphasizes unity as ultimate German goal

From Ian Murray, Bonn

German unity must be the ultimate aim of a promised co-operation treaty with East Germany, Herr Rudolf Seiters, the West German Chancellor's Minister, told the Bundestag yesterday in the bluntest statement yet of the Bonn Government's hopes of reunification.

While agreeing that the final decision must be left to the East German people, he made it absolutely clear that the treaty must be "the first step on the way to confederal structures, which eventually turn into a federation".

Herr Seiters, the Christian Democrat (CDU) minister who has been most closely involved in negotiations with East Germany since the fall of the old regime, travels to East Berlin again next week for meetings with the Government and opposition groups. The visit to Bonn of

Herr Hans Modrow, the caretaker Prime Minister, would go ahead in the middle of next month, he said, when the most important theme would be new legislation being prepared for the East German polls on May 6.

It was also important that a new political and economic framework could be discussed so that East Germans had an encouraging future opening before them. He called on the Government not to delay in introducing real political and economic reforms so that the flow of refugees to the West would stop. Preparatory work on the treaty was going ahead with the transitional Government, he said, although it could only be finalized if a freely elected Parliament was created after the election on May 6. Afterwards one aim was to set up a joint group

of members from the two German parliaments.

In the negotiations, he said, the perspective of a federal system for the entire country had to be clearly stated. "We want a freely elected Parliament in East Germany to have such a perspective for the solution of the national question and, along with that, a confirmation of the goal of national German unity."

According to Herr Seiters, the treaty must not be drawn up so that it would perpetuate the division of Germany. Herr Horst Ehmke, the deputy Bundestag leader of the opposition Social Democrats (SPD), did not criticize the stated aims of the Government, although he said it was "silly" to have excluded the SPD from discussions on formulating a policy on a question which affected all the German people. Like

Herr Seiters, he was worried about the continuing flow of refugees from the East and called for quick, concrete measures to stem it.

His main criticism was for the latest statement by Herr Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor, on the western border of Poland, which he said still failed to make it clear that a reunification of Germany would not lead to a territorial claim on land that was part of the Third Reich in 1937. In Paris on Wednesday Herr Kohl said no responsible politician in West Germany dreamt of making any such claim. "The Germans, and no one should doubt it, have no intention of unleashing a discussion about our frontiers in the Europe of tomorrow which would of necessity call into question the peace of Europe to which we are all committed." However, the Chancellor stuck

to the fine point that it was impossible for the leader of one part of Germany to make a statement renouncing the territorial rights of the entire country. He still maintains that this step can only be taken by the government of a united country.

This refusal to go the whole way was interpreted by Herr Ehmke as proof that the Chancellor was pandering to far-right voters, who still want to see a Germany reunited in the 1937 borders.

● **EAST BERLIN:** The shaky coalition Government in East Germany avoided a threatened breakdown yesterday when the minor parties who support the ruling Communists pledged that they would continue in coalition to preserve stability in the country.

Roads to unity, page 12

Bulgaria orders Zhivkov arrest

From Michael Horasby, Sofia

A warrant for the arrest of Mr Todor Zhivkov, Bulgaria's disgraced former ruler who was dislodged from power on November 10 in an internal Communist Party coup, has been issued by the Prosecutor-General, it was announced here yesterday.

The Prosecutor-General's office said Mr Zhivkov, aged 78, faced charges of "incitement of ethnic hostility and



Mr Zhivkov: Faces charges of inciting ethnic hostility. hatred, unwarranted receiving of excessive amounts of public property, and gross malfeasance." A warrant had been issued "to remand in custody" the prosecutors had been assigned to conduct the investigation into the charges against him, BTA, the national news

agency, said. The statement did not say if or when Mr Zhivkov would be put on trial, or make clear whether he would be put in jail or kept under house arrest at a residence outside Sofia where he is believed to have been confined since his fall from power.

The news agency said the investigation would be conducted on the basis of evidence supplied by a parliamentary commission of inquiry.

● **FRAGUE:** Communists in Czechoslovakia lost their last hold on power yesterday when Mr Marian Calfa, the Prime Minister, resigned from the Communist Party.

Mr Calfa is the third Communist member of the Government of "national consensus" to resign this month (Peter Green writes). Only seven Communists are now left in the 21-member coalition Government.

Mr Calfa announced his resignation from the party at a regularly scheduled news conference yesterday. He gave no reason. By handing in his party card, Mr Calfa became Czechoslovakia's first non-Communist head of government in 41 years.

Czechoslovakia now joins Poland and Romania as the only East European states run by non-Communists.

Lufthansa to join forces with East German airline

By Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent

The West German national airline, Lufthansa, is preparing an important commercial tie-up with its East German counterpart, Interflug, in a move which could revolutionize air travel between the two countries and pave the way for even closer co-operation in the future.

In plans to be announced today, Lufthansa will lend the East German airline some of its modern jets to replace the ageing Soviet-built aircraft

that Interflug now operates, offer training facilities for flight deck and cabin crews, link the East into its sophisticated computer reservation systems, help develop freight operations and provide electronic software to enable the state-owned airline to expand into a key international carrier.

At the same time Lufthansa will renew its calls for a formal air services agreement between the two countries which

would enable them to fly more regular services. Since Germany was divided, the two nations have been barred from signing any agreement and scheduled operations have had to be approved by the allies.

Lufthansa, which is 54 per cent government-owned and has a fleet of 150 aircraft, is convinced that there is a huge demand for cross-border flights which until now it has been unable to meet.

Initial moves towards relax-

ing controls began in August when Lufthansa was given permission to fly between Frankfurt and Leipzig. This was renewed two months later and again at the beginning of this year.

Lufthansa is determined, however, to push for far more routes and will argue that they should be negotiated between the two states directly rather than by a circuitous route now insisted upon by the Nato allies who ban flights across

military zones. With 10 million people now crossing between East and West at any one time and no restrictions on road or rail access, it believes the potential for a sharp growth in air travel is enormous, provided aviation can be freed from present constraints.

The largely undeveloped holiday areas of the Baltic could be a great attraction for tourists, says Lufthansa. It is proposing a joint venture under which 51 per cent of the

cash to build hotels and tourist infrastructure would be provided from the East and the rest from the West.

In particular, however, it is pushing for Berlin to be opened up to international air competition. To meet this demand, one of the airports needs to be expanded considerably and it favours the development in the East Berlin airport or Schönefeld, rather than in the crowded airport in the west of the city.

هَذَا مِنْ الْأَصْلِ

THE CHANGING FACE OF EUROPE

Hungarians want Soviet troops out by next year

From Michael Evans, Vienna

Hungary broke ranks with Moscow yesterday and called for the removal of all Soviet troops from its territory by 1991 at the latest and a ceiling on all foreign troops stationed in Europe of "well below" 275,000 on each side of the Warsaw Pact-Nato divide.

Hungary's proposals, put forward at the Conventional Forces in Europe talks in Vienna, coincided with a call yesterday from Poland for all Soviet troops to be withdrawn from its territory by the end of 1990 — the third eastern bloc country to make such a demand.

Mr Lech Walesa, the Solidarity leader, put the demand to the Soviet ambassador in Gdansk. Mr Walesa told Mr Vladimir Brovnikov that the withdrawal of all 45,000 Soviet troops in Poland would be a condition of his country's building a new relationship with the Kremlin.

So far, as a gesture, the Soviet Union has begun removing some 10,000 soldiers. Mr Walesa was invited to visit Moscow for further talks and Solidarity sources say a meeting "is envisaged" with President Gorbachev.

Hungary's initiative, however, is significant because it represents the first time that a Warsaw Pact country has presented a new proposal on its own at the CFE talks without first getting approval from Moscow.

The accelerated timetable for the withdrawal from Hungary of the 50,000 to 60,000 Soviet troops was clearly a response to Czechoslovakia's similar demands on Moscow.

Prague has dealt with the matter on a bilateral basis, but Hungary's decision to include Soviet troops in its initiative was obviously aimed at causing the maximum impact at the talks.

Yesterday Mr Ferenc Somogyi, one of two state secretaries at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Budapest, who flew to Vienna to present the new proposals, said that his Government would like the Soviet troops to leave by the end of this year.

"It is our position that there are no reasons, be they of a political, military-security or arms control character, that would justify the stationing of foreign troops on the territory

of Hungary," he said. He confirmed that Moscow had not approved the new Hungarian initiative.

However, in talks which are expected to begin with Soviet officials next week, Budapest will offer December 1991 as the final deadline.

Hungary's second proposal for lower limits on stationed foreign forces would have significant implications for the three Nato countries in West Germany, the United States, Britain and France.

Nato has proposed that US and Soviet forces stationed in Europe be cut to 275,000 each. This would mean the withdrawal and demobilization of 325,000 Soviet and 30,000 American troops. The Warsaw Pact has proposed a ceiling of 300,000 to 350,000, but to include all stationed forces, not just those of the two superpowers.

The Hungarian plan embraces both proposals but calls for a figure well below 275,000.

The Hungarian proposal could be in line with the Bush Administration, some of whose officials believe that the 275,000 ceiling is too high and is out of step with the political developments that have transformed Eastern Europe in recent months.

The US has 305,000 troops in central Europe, mostly in West Germany. Britain has 69,700 Army and RAF personnel in West Germany, and France 52,700. Nato forces in Europe total 467,000.

Nato has refused to countenance the inclusion of any of the non-American forces in the proposed manpower ceiling, so it is likely that the Hungarian initiative will be rejected.

The Soviet Union, faced with demands to withdraw its troops from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and now Poland — a total of about 180,000 soldiers — must be wondering where it is going to be allowed to station its forces under a CFE agreement. East Germany would be the only country left.

So far, the Soviet Union has withdrawn 10,000 troops, 470 tanks and 200 guns from Hungary under President Gorbachev's unilateral proposal to cut Soviet forces in Eastern Europe by 50,000.

Romania reverses ban on Communist Party



Out of bounds: Soldiers turn back a man and his children taking a shortcut past the National Salvation Front headquarters in Bucharest. Security was stepped up yesterday as Romania's interim Government lifted its ban on the Communist Party.

Bucharest (Rexter) — The revolutionary leadership in Romania yesterday lifted the ban it announced last week on the Communist Party, following criticism that outlawing it was undemocratic.

In yet another policy switch, the ruling National Salvation Front cancelled a January 12 decree banning the party, which ran the country with a rod of iron for more than 40 years.

Mr Silviu Brucan, a key member of the Front's inner circle, said that a second decree calling for a referendum on the death penalty was also abrogated.

The result of yesterday's announcement was that two plebiscites scheduled for January 28 were called off. The Front had earlier agreed to let Romanians decide whether to ban the Communist Party or not.

Mr Brucan said that communism was a spent force in Romania after Nicolae Ceausescu's harsh 24-year regime. He said: "It is a fact that the party has excluded itself from the political life of the country." Mr Brucan added: "There is no democratic country which should forbid by law the existence of the Communist Party."

He said that the only kind of party that would be banned in Romania would be a fascist one. The announcement en-

ded 24 hours of speculation in Bucharest that the Front was preparing another of the policy changes which have coloured its brief history.

From Mr Brucan's remarks it seemed clear that free elections scheduled for April would be postponed.

Emerging political parties have called for more time to organize and the Front has said it is not opposed to a delay.

Since it took power after the overthrow and execution of Ceausescu last month, the new regime has been bedevilled by the issues of the death penalty and the Communist Party.

First it abolished capital punishment, after Ceausescu and Elena, his wife, went before a firing squad on Christmas Day.

But under pressure from an angry crowd wanting revenge against detained members of the Securitate, it agreed by decree to put the issue to a referendum.

Church resignation: Patriarch Teoctist, the head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, resigned yesterday, a senior church official said (Rexter reports).

Archimandrite Cassian Craciun declined to say why the Patriarch had stepped down, but he had been criticized for supporting the Ceausescu regime.

Yugoslav feuding points to end of power monopoly

From Dena Trevisan, Belgrade

Whatever compromise may be devised to save the fractured Yugoslav communist party, the Yugoslav League of Communists, the congress which opens tomorrow is expected to be riven by national factions representing policies so far apart they can hardly be reconciled. The party is facing the threat of disintegration.

Mr Stefan Korosec, the federal party's secretary — a Slovene often targeted for attack by the conservative faction mainly associated with Mr Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian hardline leader, has spoken of the party's abandoning its monopoly in favour of a multi-party system.

But fears remain in Serbia that the end of the communist monopoly will lead to the growth of nationalistic parties and hasten the fragmentation of Yugoslavia into a feuding collection of Balkan states. This remains the case although events in Romania have clearly prompted even the Serbian communists to accept pluralism and change some of their centralist postures.

The old argument that only a centralized communist party could hold Yugoslavia's disparate republics together was disproved long ago as the federal party has seen practically all its power move to the regional party leaderships.

The Slovene communists who stand for democratic reforms last week formally approved reconstructing the federal League of Communists effectively as a coalition of independent parties, as widely apart ideologically as social democrats are from Communists in Western Europe.

If this is not accepted, the Slovene communists could proceed as an independent organization in so way bound by federal leadership.

The Croatian communists, on the other hand, have instructed their delegates to the

congress to stand by demands that democratic centralism associated with the centralized, Stalinist type of communist party be abolished, which amounts to the death of the federal party as a political force.

Serbia alone stands firmly behind a centralized communist party structure in which no dissent note is tolerated but, finding itself increasingly isolated in recent weeks, its hitherto firm opposition to democratic reform in general and to a multi-party system in particular has been relaxed.

Ethnic tensions in Yugoslavia are on the boil with the six republics and the country's numerous ethnic groups conducting a proxy civil war through the media. Serbia has imposed an economic boycott on Slovene goods, while the Serbian politicians and their totally controlled media keep accusing Yugoslavia's northern republics of building an anti-Serbian alliance and aiming to break up the Yugoslav federal state.

In the prevalently Albanian-populated Kosovo autonomous region, where the Serbs are applying the old repressive methods against Albanian nationalism, a state of emergency imposed a year ago is still in force. At least 30 people died in demonstrations last year.

Once the most open communist country, Yugoslavia now finds itself at the tail-end of East European reforms. On the eve of the congress at which the party should relinquish its monopoly, Serbia is in open conflict with Slovenia, Croatia and Mr Ante Markovic, the federal Prime Minister, whose daring programme of liberal economic and political reform not only enjoys folklore support from other parts of the country but offers what many regard as the last chance for Yugoslavia.

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For the best of America

Cold shoulder from Latin America for mission by Quayle

From Martin Fletcher, Washington

President Bush's plan to send Mr Dan Quayle, his Vice-President, on a fence-mending tour of Latin America to explain the United States invasion of Panama has met with a sharp rebuff.

Some of the most important nations in the region have said that they do not want to see Mr Quayle at this time. The President announced the plan at a press conference on January 5, saying that he had asked Mr Quayle to visit "a number of countries within the next several weeks" on a mission of "enormous importance". Mr Bush admitted that the invasion on December 20 had damaged Washington's relations with Latin American countries.

He said Mr Quayle was "to personally deliver" a message from him that the US wanted to be "a friendly, supportive and respectful neighbour" and was not reverting to "a wilful use of force... that has no rationale".

Now, instead of country-hopping, Mr Quayle's itinerary is restricted to three presidential inaugurations between now and mid-March - which he was scheduled to attend in any case - besides visits to Panama and to Jamaica, Mexico and Venezuela,

both outspoken critics of the invasion of Panama, are among nations which are known to have told the White House that Mr Quayle's visit would be distinctly unhelpful to their governments and could lead to anti-American demonstrations.

A visit to Costa Rica has been ruled out because it has elections on February 5, but other key nations, such as Peru, Bolivia and El Salvador, are also off the list.

One senior Administration official who was quoted in *The Washington Post* yesterday admitted there had been a White House "miscalculation" in believing that Latin America would appreciate high-level US attention.

Much more time appears to be needed before Latin American hostility to the use of US military force in the region settles down.

Mr Quayle himself acknowledged that there were "diplomatic sensitivities" surrounding the proposed timing of his visit, but asserted: "No country has said, 'We don't want the Vice-President, period.'"

This is the second example of the Administration's badly misjudging the mood in Latin America since the invasion.

A few days ago, it admitted shelving plans to deploy a

naval task force off the Colombian coast to prevent drugs being shipped to the United States by air or sea.

Advance leaks of the plan, which was to have been unveiled formally by the Pentagon this week, used the term "blockade", which enraged Colombians, whose sensitivities had already been heightened by the use of US military muscle in Panama, which shares a border with Colombia.

Mr Quayle will now make two trips to Latin America. He will attend the inauguration of Señor Rafael Calleja, the President-elect, in Honduras on January 27, before travelling on to Panama and Jamaica. He will also attend presidential inaugurations in Brazil and Chile on March 11 and 15 respectively.

STRAZBOURG: The European Parliament yesterday condemned the US invasion and called for the immediate withdrawal from Panama of US "occupying troops" (AP reports).

The 518-member assembly said that the military intervention had been a "flagrant violation of the sovereignty and integrity of an independent state" - even if the nation had no "freely elected government".

Monument to dustmen's strike



The Acropolis, shrouded in a brown smog, is surrounded by uncollected rubbish as a dustmen's strike enters its ninth day in Athens. Fears are growing that the rotting piles of rubbish and the pollution could pose a health hazard in the Greek capital.

Far-right Japanese shoots mayor

From Joe Joseph Tokyo

Mr Hitoshi Motoshima, the Mayor of Nagasaki, was yesterday shot through the chest by a right-wing extremist.

Mr Motoshima, who had broken a Japanese taboo by suggesting that the late Emperor Hirohito, venerated by nationalists as a god, bore some responsibility for the Second World War, was shot by Mr Kazumi Tajiri, a prominent right-wing activist who later confessed.

Mr Motoshima, shot from behind as he emerged from Nagasaki City Hall, was taken for surgery at a nearby hospital. His condition was serious, but his life was said not to be in danger.

The Roman Catholic mayor made his controversial remark in December 1988, when Hirohito's failing health had reopened a worldwide debate about his war conduct.

The remark drew a battalion of angry right-wingers in army lorries to Nagasaki.

They patrolled the streets, flying the Rising Sun flag, blasting military music through loudspeakers, and threatening the mayor with death threats and gunshots at his office windows.

Because of the death threats and the arrival of live bullets in his mail, Mr Motoshima had been under 24-hour guard by police. But, tiring of the security, Mr Motoshima had asked for the police guard to be called off last month.

Harassment of the mayor had stirred public debate in Japan about Hirohito's past. His shooting has sparked another one about the tolerance of free speech in a conservative and traditional society, in which notions of racial purity and superiority are never far from the surface.

Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone, the former Prime Minister, sang the praises of the "monarchical state", and history textbooks gloss over Japanese war atrocities. The "unique" inestness of the Japanese have been cited as a reason they cannot eat imported beef, while the "uniqueness" of Japanese snow has been put forward as a rationale not to buy skins made in Europe.

Japanese nationalists yearn for the glorious days when the Emperor ruled as well as reigned over a continental empire.

TV drugs drama sparks Mexico-US war of words

From James Bone, New York

A television fictionalization of the murder of an American drug agent has caused a "mini-war" between Mexico and the US.

The NBC television network's three-part series, *Drug Wars: The Camarena Story*, dramatizes the life and death of Mr Enrique Camarena Salazar, a US Drug Enforcement Administration agent who was kidnapped by Mexican police in 1985 and found dead a month later.

The series, which was filmed with the co-operation of the DEA and shown on national television last week, was accompanied by news coverage in which US officials cast doubt on Mexico's commitment to the war on drugs. The Mexican Government has reacted furiously to the suggestion of widespread corruption and complicity in drug trafficking by Mexican officials.

The state-owned television network Imevision accused Mr Camarena, who is glorified in the NBC series, of being "one more drug trafficker" who infiltrated the American

anti-drug agency, betrayed his partner and for that reason was murdered.

Notime, the state-owned news agency, reported that Mexico planned to reopen the Camarena case and begin a new investigation of the dead agent's alleged links with two cocaine barons now in Mexican jails.

On Tuesday a Mexican private sector group placed a provocative full-page advertisement in *The New York Times*, proclaiming that Mexico says "No to drugs" and asking "And meanwhile, what have you done in the USA?"

Although neither government wants the dispute to escalate, there have already been calls in Mexico for the expulsion of the 40 or so DEA agents now in the country.

Despite the controversy, Washington is standing by Mr Camarena, whom Mr Martin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman, described this week as "an outstanding DEA agent who performed valiantly... President Bush has said Camarena was a hero and we still believe it".

South Africa reviews ANC ban

From Gavin Bell, Johannesburg

The South African Government is reviewing its banning order on the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party. It has also invited another prominent anti-apartheid organization to apply for the removal of restrictions against it.

Congressional statements by senior Cabinet ministers yesterday came after an announcement by the United Democratic Front, the principal surrogate of the ANC, that it would no longer submit to restrictions imposed on it two years ago.

Mr Marjory Morobe, a Front spokesman, said it intended reopening offices throughout the country and would intensify its defiance campaign launched last year.

Mr Adrian Vlok, the Min-

ister of Law and Order, said in a statement that if the Front believed its activities were no longer a threat to the public, the maintenance of law and order, or the ending of the state of emergency, it was free to apply to him to have the restrictions lifted.

He said, however, that if the Front violated the restrictions without permission, it would contravene the emergency regulations and any such action would be investigated by the Attorney-General.

Mr Kobie Coetsee, the Justice Minister, said the Government was reviewing restrictions on all banned organizations. Asked whether the ANC and the communists were included, he reiterated that it was a "comprehensive review" of all organizations.

However Mr Mohammed

Valli, assistant secretary-general of the Front, said his organization had no intention of applying for the restrictions to be lifted. "Our decision to operate is not dependent on Mr Vlok's consent. We have reached a point now where we are convinced the Government has no choice but to allow organizations like the UDF to operate openly."

A sign of the times is that the media is flouting laws that prohibit the quoting of banned people. The Afrikaans-language daily *Beeld* published a front-page report this week quoting Mr Joe Slovo, the communist leader.

The Front, formed in 1983, is the most important anti-apartheid alliance operating openly in South Africa. As a coalition of several hundred political, trade union and hu-

man rights groups, it claims more than two million members and orchestrates campaigns in consultation with the ANC leadership in Lusaka.

The abolition of bans and restrictions on anti-apartheid groups is one of the measures insisted upon by the ANC as a precondition for negotiations.

Dr Denis Worrall, co-leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, yesterday called on President de Klerk to accede to the demands when he opened Parliament in Cape Town on February 2. "Failure to announce these steps will have profound negative consequences for South Africa. We have to grab the imagination, the wonder and respect of the international community very quickly, and that means that Mr de Klerk cannot drop the ball on February 2."

WORLD ROUNDUP

Aoun tightens gag on Beirut press

West Beirut - General Michel Aoun, the Lebanese Christian leader, is intensifying his campaign to force the Beirut press to endorse his military cabinet as the only legitimate government (Juan Carlos Gumucio writes).

Yesterday, soldiers prevented the distribution of the French-language *L'Orient-Le Jour* for not complying with his directive on Tuesday banning any reference to President Hrawi as the head of state. *Al-Nahar* in west Beirut has stopped publication and *ad-Diyar*, the leading daily in east Beirut, has challenged the ban, incurring a week's suspension and a possible jail sentence for its editor of up to five years. Three radio stations are on strike.

Poor-snow payments

Geneva - With the persistent anticyclone set to continue over the Alps, the Swiss Government has decided to indemnify winter sports employees losing earnings because of a lack of snow for the third winter in a row (Alan McGregor writes). Compensation is to be paid from unemployment insurance funds. The arrangement will be made permanent in a Bill being put before Parliament which will provide payments to cover losses due to "accidents of weather". Ski instructors, ski-lift attendants and hotel and restaurant employees will be the main beneficiaries. Only those who have ceased all gainful employment will qualify.

Bush aide in Manila

Washington - President Bush has sent a top aide on a sudden mission to the Philippines to underscore US support for President Aquino (Martin Fletcher writes). The move follows reports that another coup attempt may soon be mounted against Mrs Aquino. In December she survived the sixth and most serious coup attempt after Mr Bush authorized the use of American warplanes to give her forces air cover. The trip to Manila of Mr Robert Gates, the Deputy National Security adviser, was not announced until after he had left on Wednesday. Mr Martin Fitzwater, the White House press secretary, said he was going to make it clear the US would back Mrs Aquino in the face of "continuing reports of problems in terms of security forces".

Oil menaces Madeira

Funchal (Reuters) - Portugal appealed to the European Community yesterday to help it prevent an ecological disaster on the Madeira islands, threatened by a 13-mile oil slick. The Navy asked for tanks and booms from the EC's anti-pollution department to contain the spill, which has already polluted beaches and killed wildlife, officials said.

The regional government fears the slick could ruin the tourism trade on the main islands, Madeira and Porto Santo, and devastate a sanctuary for rare seals and birds. Stretches of Porto Santo's golden sands have been blackened by oily sludge and the slick has also washed ashore on the rocky northern coast of Madeira, one of Europe's favourite winter holiday spots.

Italy tackles smog

Rome - In an attempt to reduce air pollution, Signor Carmelo Conte, the Italian Minister for Urban Areas, yesterday called on mayors to close their city centres to traffic (Paul Bompard writes). He also asked that an existing law on the construction of parking space be respected. In Milan, where lack of wind and rain has kept a vast cloud of smog hovering over the city for two weeks, the mayor has signed an order forbidding the use of private cars on Sunday. The only precedent is a Sunday driving ban imposed in the early 1970s to reduce oil imports.

China releases 573 pro-democracy protesters



Professor Fang Lizhi may be allowed to leave embassy.

Peking (Reuters) - China said yesterday it had released from prison 573 protesters arrested for taking part in the pro-democracy unrest crushed by the Army last June.

The Ministry of Public Security said the prisoners were freed because they had pleaded guilty and repented. It called on unrepentant offenders to do likewise.

"Our policy is to educate anyone who can be educated and temper punishment with leniency," a spokesman for the ministry was quoted as saying by the official New China News Agency.

It is the first time China has reported the release of prisoners detained for anti-government activities last year.

The announcement was calculated to improve China's

image overseas and to attract badly needed foreign bank credits, diplomats said.

There was no way of verifying the report, which did not mention names, say when the prisoners were released or describe their offences.

A police spokesman said he had not heard of the move and declined to specify how many dissidents remain in custody.

Security forces rounded up thousands of dissidents and "hooligans" in nationwide manhunt after troops, supported by heavy armour, shot their way into Peking last June to crush the student-led demonstrations for democracy.

China has termed the unrest a "counter-revolutionary rebellion". Few trials have been shown publicly and no official sentencing figures have been

published. More than 800 Chinese have been sentenced to prison for pro-democracy activities, many for as long as 10 years. *The Washington Post* quoted Chinese sources as saying this week.

Western nations protested against China's crackdown by imposing limited sanctions, including a halt to new government credits. Most have now lifted some of those punitive measures and a further easing is expected.

Marital law was lifted in Peking last week after nearly eight months. Western nations, led by the United States, hailed the move as a step in the right direction.

A Western diplomat said of the prisoner releases reported yesterday: "This announcement looks like it's for foreign

consumption. It helps China's human rights image, which is especially important in the United States."

Asian diplomats in Tokyo said on Wednesday that a solution to the main stumbling-block in Sino-US relations was under discussion.

Professor Fang Lizhi, the wanted dissident still sheltering with his wife inside the US Embassy in Peking, might be allowed to leave for a third country if he admitted that he had made errors.

The World Bank would resume lending as part of the package, the diplomats said.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman declined comment yesterday, a shift from previous denials of a deal. He did not repeat previous Chinese ultimatums that Professor

Fang, an astrophysicist, confess and mend his ways.

Several dissidents have been released in recent weeks. Wang Yan, a political scientist who worked with the exiled dissident Yan Jiaqi, was freed late last month. Gao Xin, one of four hunger strikers in Tiananmen Square on June 4 last year, was also freed from prison last month.

HONG KONG: A rush began here to sell off the world's biggest ivory stockpile after winning a six-month reprieve from a worldwide export ban yesterday (Reuters reports).

The reprieve, negotiated by Britain on behalf of its colony, prohibits imports but allows the disposal of existing stocks under a strict licensing system. Leading article, page 13

Repatriation crisis

Hong Kong introduces fast-track refugee screening

From Jonathan Brande, Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Government has introduced faster screening procedures for Vietnamese boat people arriving in the territory, in a renewed attempt to discourage others from risking the dangerous journey from Vietnam.

Newcomers are being interviewed almost immediately at a special reception centre, while those already languishing in crowded detention camps here will still have to wait months for the chance to prove that they are genuine political refugees.

Mr Geoffrey Barnes, the

colony's Secretary for Security, said that the fast-track screening programme was an attempt to strengthen and speed up the message that those arriving in Hong Kong would be deported if they were "screened out" as economic migrants.

The Government is also claiming that the sooner non-refugees can be sent home, the easier it will be to reintegrate them into Vietnamese society.

However, there is no plan at this stage to put those who are screened out under the fast-track policy at the head of the

queue for repatriation to Vietnam.

Mr Barnes stressed that they had the same right as other boat people to appeal within 28 days if determined as non-refugees.

Amnesty International has expressed concern over the two-track screening policy for the boat people, stating that the six lawyers employed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to monitor the process are already overstretched.

The office of the High Commissioner fears that the

priority given to new arrivals will slow down the screening of the huge backlog in the camps.

Mr Barnes said the new policy had been in place since the new year.

But, during the visit earlier this week of Mr Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, British officials hinted at the idea as if it were still on the drawing-board.

Officials were unable to comment yesterday on the timing of the Secretary for Security's announcement.

Observers point out that the

policy might originally have been intended for presentation this week at a meeting of the Steering Committee on Indo-Chinese Refugees in Geneva.

That meeting, now postponed until next Tuesday at the request of the United States, will try to reach international agreement on Britain's controversial policy of forced repatriation for non-refugees.

One hundred and forty-four Vietnamese boat people have arrived in Hong Kong since January 1. They will have

priority over the 34,000 boat-people who sailed into the territory last year.

There have been no further mandatory repatriations since the much-criticized deportation of 51 Vietnamese last month, although Britain insists the policy has not been put on ice.

However, more than 1,000 people have returned to Vietnam under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees-sponsored voluntary repatriation scheme, and another 1,200 people are expected to follow them.

Britain fails in attempt to increase EC power base

From Peter Gullford Strasbourg

Britain yesterday failed to sway the European Commission into increasing the number of prime posts it will hold in Brussels in the countdown to 1992 and the single market.

After intense horse-trading, it appears that Sir Leon Brittan, the British Commissioner, has been unsuccessful in his move to end what Brittan perceives as its inadequate representation in the EC hierarchy.

Britain has gained a bad reputation in Brussels for seeking to alter draft laws late in the day, but it has

been argued that its under-representation has been a prime reason.

Sir Leon recently blocked the new appointments as a lever to attempt to have the job of director-general in charge of industry and the 1992 single market - one of the most strategic posts in Brussels - given to a Briton.

However, Signor Riccardo Pirelli, an Italian, has been chosen for the job. One of his deputies will be British.

The Commission cites the need to appoint internally as its chief reason

for the latest appointments, while promising to respect "the personal wishes of the Commissioners" and an accurate balance between the member states.

France and Italy have landed some prime positions in the past through tough lobbying, but Whitehall has considered this approach ungentlemanly. The latest appointments may encourage Britain to change its tactics.

However, although losing the strategic single market portfolio, Britain has won the prime post of directing customs union and indirect

taxation, which will become more important as Community borders are lowered and taxes approximated in the run-up to 1992.

This post may be filled by Mr John Mogg, who was seconded to the Department of Trade and Industry from the Cabinet Office.

In return for the customs and taxation portfolio, Britain loses its position of controlling the EC's task force for promoting small and medium-sized businesses. A West German delegate will replace Mr Alan Mayhew.

Britain will have three director-

generals (one for personnel), in addition to Mr David Williamson, currently the secretary-general and titular head of the Commission bureaucracy.

French will head agriculture, the budget and technology, while West Germans will be in charge of external relations, Third World development, small businesses and the powerful competition portfolio, which goes to Herr Claus-Dieter Ehlermann.

His position as Commission spokesman is also expected to go to a West German.

كلوا من الاصل

January 18 1990

PARLIAMENT

Tories interrupt as Patten gives poll tax details

To a barrage of interruptions from his own backbenchers, Mr Christopher Patten, Secretary of State for the Environment, set out his proposals for central government support for local authorities under the community charge.

He said that for the past 10 to 15 years there had been arguments about how to control local government spending and how to raise money efficiently and fairly.

In recent years local government spending had been increasing more quickly than that of central government spending. The community charge would lead to greater clarity and accountability.

The Government would have no hesitation in charging rates which set over-high charges.

Mr Patten, moving approval of five reports on local government spending and central government support, said that they formed the basis for the local government grants settlement for next year.

"Whatever ones views about the new system of financing local government, I think there is very little doubt that there will be more clarity about local government spending in the future than there has been in the past."

"Second, I believe that there will be more accountability about local government spending... I think one of the reasons for some of the opposition that we have experienced in the last few weeks is precisely because of that greater clarity and greater accountability."

Mr James Pawsey (Rugby and Kenilworth, C), intervening, said that standard spending assessments (SSAs) worked to the marked disadvantage of shire counties and this would be reflected in the community charge.

"The way in which SSAs are being calculated is fundamentally incorrect and fundamentally flawed."

Sir Alan Glynn (Windsor and Maidenhead, C) asked for further government concessions on SSAs and safety nets. His constituents faced a community charge of £500.

Mr Patten said that Wind-

son's SSA had been increased though not as much as the council would have liked. A community charge figure of such a size would suggest an increase in council spending of 20 per cent.

No one doubted that local authorities undertook vital functions, often very well. But whatever accolades were showered on them, it was unreasonable to argue that there should be one rule for the control of local government spending and another for central government spending.

Most of the row for the past 10 to 15 years had been on a simple point. Local authorities said that central government was not providing enough money and that they intended to spend more, regardless of the burden on taxpayers and ratepayers. Central government then said that it must constrain local government spending.

Whatever the rows in the Commons, the position was the same every year — the real level of local authority spending increased more rapidly than central government spending.

In the past five years, central government current expenditure had increased by 2.4 per cent. That of local government had increased by 9.4 per cent. So even if it were argued that central government was attempting to squeeze local government until the pips squeaked, what had happened was that local government spending had taken a larger proportion of total public expenditure year after year.

Local authorities said that the reason for high community charges would not be their spending decisions but something inherent in the community charge itself or the switchover from grant related expenditure to SSAs.

"Many of the sort of figures for spending increases being suggested by local authorities for next year would have meant the most astronomical increases in domestic rates if we were not going over it. It is levels of spending which determine the level of the community charge."

The Government was allowing for £32.8 billion on local authority expenditure next year. That represented an increase of 11 per cent over what it had been prepared to provide this year.

Was that figure unfair because of some measure this year?

It was difficult to argue that because this year's figure was 9.9 per cent higher than last year's, and last year's figure was 7.3 per cent more than the figure for the year before. However, all local authorities had said that on average they intended to budget over 9.1 per cent increase by 1990. That represented £1.9 billion extra.

"The basis of the local authorities' case is that whatever the level of overspending, whatever the overrun on spending in one year, this should be taken as the base line for increases in spending the next year. The logic of that argument is that local authority expenditure would never be within control, that local authority expenditure would increase year after year as a proportion of public expenditure."

There was power in legislation to charge-cap, just as there had previously been power to rate-cap. Many argued that it would be wrong to charge-cap because they thought it wrong to interrupt the transmission mechanism between what a local authority spent and the purse or wallet of the community charge payer.

"I understand that argument particularly well, but if some of the horrendously high figures for community charge which we have heard being bandied about are actually set next year, we will have absolutely no hesitation in capping the authorities concerned" (Conservative cheers).

Many of the MPs had said that the Government should go further and meet the costs of the safety net in the first year as well, at a cost of £650 million.

"I want to face that issue absolutely squarely with Conservative MPs. I do not believe that this is a matter to which one can bring much in the way of scientific judgement. It is entirely a matter of political judgement and of one's views of priorities."

Looking at other ways of spending money, he could not press the case for spending an extra £650 million on parts of the country which were benefiting from the changes.

He wanted finally to come to the question of the consequences of the move from GREAs (grant-related expenditure assessments) to SSAs.



Mr Patrick Nicholson, Under Secretary of State, Department of Employment, at the Criterion project in central London yesterday, where he launched the regulations that will make the wearing of safety helmets compulsory on building sites from the end of March.

"The SSA methodology is not cast in stone (loud Conservative cries of 'Hear, hear' and 'more'). If MPs or the local authorities in their constituencies wish to come to us with fresh evidence for new methodology for SSAs, we are quite prepared to look at changes..."

Mr Ian Bruce (South Dorset, C) asked him to explain why Dorset would be losing £5 million grant after his constituents had been assured that this would be a fairer system and that they would be getting a greater amount of grant.

Mr Patten said that, overall in Dorset, there was an increase of 7 per cent in SSA over GREAs and a 11 per cent increase in total aggregate external finance

going in next year over this. "But I am quite prepared to look at new evidence brought by him and other MPs based on the SSA."

Mr Ralph Howell (North Norfolk, C) said the scheme was flawed from the start and nothing could repair it. It should be scrapped.

Mr Brian Gould, chief Opposition spokesman on the environment, said that the debate would give an opportunity for those who might have previously endorsed the Government's proposals to make a new judgement on their practical consequences.

MPs were under an obligation to reach a new judgement now on the basis of the facts presented to them in these reports.

Mr Patten's speech had revealed a lack of warmth for his own proposals.

He had made a number of attempts to change them, introducing safety nets and transitional relief. "But we now must accept that the Secretary of State (Mr Patten) has reached the end of the road." He could do nothing more. "He is unwilling to find any more money (Mr Patten nodded)."

"There is nothing this House can do by voting tonight to force the Treasury's hand. We can still come to the aid of Mr Patten, who has clearly lost the debate in Cabinet, by voting against these reports."

Ministers guilty of deceit, says Kinnock

PRIME MINISTER

The Government was guilty of incompetence and deceit over the poll tax, Mr Neil Kinnock said during noisy exchanges at question time. He called the tax absurd and dishonest.

Mr Thatcher countered his and other Opposition criticism by saying that the community charge would prove to be much fairer than the rating system.

There was loud laughter on the Opposition benches when she referred to the charge as the poll tax, and Mr Charles Kennedy (Dumfriesshire, C) warmly congratulated her on using the "correct term".

Mr Kinnock, Leader of the Opposition, opening the exchanges, said that the poll-tax bills that people got would be much bigger than those promised by the Government. This gap between promise and reality showed that the Government was guilty of both incompetence and deception.

Mrs Thatcher: No. The Government set the level of reasonable spending for the coming year at 11 per cent over reasonable spending for this year. If local authorities spend over that, the community charge will go up. If there were high community charges, it would be well to look for the fault to Labour local authorities.

Mr Kinnock: She is trying to deceive yet again.

The Speaker (Mr Bernard Weatherill) asked him to rephrase his remark.

Mr Kinnock: The Prime Minister just cannot stop herself trying to misrepresent the situation. Did she not yet understand that local authorities all over the country, Conservative as well as Labour, were telling her repeatedly, as were some Tory MPs, that the poll-tax system was both absurd and dishonest.

Mrs Thatcher said that the new poll-tax system — (Labour laughter and interruptions) — the community charge would be much fairer and make local councils accountable to the electors. "It would demonstrate which were the extravagant authorities and which were the careful spenders."

It was Labour authorities that were extravagant, and that was why Mr Kinnock was opposed to the community charge.

Mr Kinnock said that, even if that were partly true, would the Prime Minister say why she thought that so many Conservative MPs would have such difficulty in supporting her in the vote on the new system tonight. Mrs Thatcher replied that perhaps they should reserve

their firepower for extravagant Labour local authorities.

Mr Kennedy spoke of the sense of irony, long experienced by MPs from Scotland on his side of the House, that only three of those Conservatives likely to withhold support or to vote against her tonight had bothered to vote against precisely the same legislation when it was pushed through with regard to Scotland.

Scottish ministers had been warning colleagues of the so-called dire consequences of poll tax because it highlighted the unjust and fraudulent nature of the tax and the failed nature of the policies of her ramp of a party in Scotland.

Mrs Thatcher said that the community charge was by far the fairest way of paying for the very small proportion of local government expenditure. The taxpayer paid by far the greater part and businesses paid the next greater part. All the relief and rebates and the transitional relief were paid for by the taxpayer.

"I wonder why those who criticize the community charge have no alternative to offer."

Mr Dennis Canavan (Falkirk West, Lab) said that in Scotland an estimated one million people were in serious arrears with poll-tax payments and at least 500,000 had made no payment at all. Even the *Financial Times* was today describing it as a fiscal disaster, and 40 or more Conservative MPs were set to rebel tonight. It was unjust, unworkable and unwanted by the vast majority of people.

Mrs Thatcher: It is much fairer poll-tax system, rating revaluation. Revaluation after seven years had caused enormous problems in Scotland and in England it would have been after 17 years... Once it was properly working, people would know that it was much better and fairer than the tax it replaced.

Mr Gary Walker (Keighley, C) said that companies providing employment in the North and Midlands welcomed the unified business rate, which would protect them from high-spending Labour authorities. He said the only complaint was that the phasing-in period would prevent their getting the full benefit for some time.

Mrs Thatcher said that the new business rate would help to keep costs down and ensure that businesses were not the prey of extravagant local authorities.

High pay awards 'will kill jobs'

A warning against excessive pay awards unmatched by productivity was sounded by Mr Richard Ryder, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, at question time.

He was responding to Mr Andrew Mackay (East Berkshire, C), who said that, before Christmas, shop stewards at Ford had very sensibly told their members that excessive wage claims would lead to job losses and loss of business.

"Is he, like me, disappointed at the wage offer that has been made by the Ford management and so irresponsibly rejected by the trade unions?"

Mr Ryder expressed disappointment that the unions at Ford had not accepted the offer because excessive pay awards ultimately caused unemployment unless they were matched by increases in productivity.

Earlier, he said that the underlying rate of inflation, excluding mortgage interest payments (Labour protests), was 5.1 per cent.

Mr Ken Livingstone (Brent East, Lab) said that the biggest impact on inflation would be made if the deficit on long-term capital flow out of Britain was tackled.

It was the basic reason why the Government needed to keep short-term interest rates so high

TREASURY

— to attract short-term capital to balance that.

Did anyone really value the freedom to carry on paying vast mortgage rates simply to allow British capital to flow abroad at the rate of a £30 billion deficit?

Mr Ryder: Industry has far more to fear from inflation and high pay awards than from interest rates.

Mr John Smith, chief Opposition spokesman on Treasury and economic affairs, asked if the Government stood by the Chancellor's prediction that inflation would be at an annual rate of 5.75 per cent by the fourth quarter of this year?

If the Government deliberately increased the cost of living, by forcing up mortgage rates, electricity, water, and transport prices, and by introducing the poll tax, it was guilty of "inflationary own goals", as described by the CBI.

When would the Government admit that it was responsible for the underlying rate of inflation?

Mr Ryder said that the answer to his first question was yes, and to the second question: industry had far more to fear from inflation and high pay awards than from high interest rates.

Guarded welcome for 'family' speech

Prime Minister's Questions

The Prime Minister's proposal in a speech yesterday that absent fathers should be forced to contribute to the maintenance of their children was given a guarded welcome by a Labour MP.

Dr John Reid (Motherwell North, Lab) asked who would benefit. Would it be the children, or would the Exchequer benefit instead?

Mrs Thatcher said that the mother and children would benefit. The scheme was being worked out now and would be brought forward "in due course".

Mr Geoffrey Dickens (Littleborough and Saddleworth, C) said that young couples had always had a job rate and educating children. Could it be right, just and fair for those couples that their taxes were used to pay for other people's children because fathers walked away from their financial responsibilities?

Conservative MPs and most of the public very much welcomed her statement the previous night.

Mrs Thatcher: We believe that all people have a responsibility for maintenance of their children and should not be allowed to escape it. The Government would make arrangements for collecting maintenance more effectively.

Later, at business questions, Dr John Cunningham, shadow Leader of the House, welcomed the Prime Minister's "belated" recognition that lone parents

families, after a decade of her administration, faced serious financial difficulties.

He said that the plight of lone parent families had been much worse by the freezing of child benefit, the "undermining" of the availability of housing benefit and the forcing up of mortgage rates.

Sir Geoffrey Howe, Leader of the House, said that the Government's policies were designed to raise the total economic prosperity of the country and to ensure that the resources generated went increasingly to those whose needs were greatest.

● CENTRAL BANK: The Prime Minister again made clear her opposition to the creation of a single European central bank.

Sir Peter Tapsell (Lindsey East, C) had said that if the Governor of the Bundesbank was being serious and not merely seeking to tease his own Finance Minister this week when he called for the establishment of a European central bank, totally free from all political controls, would the Prime Minister reiterate the fact that this would be overwhelmingly rejected by people of all political persuasions in this country?

Mrs Thatcher agreed. She added that the House agreed, too, judging by the recent debate.

He said that there would be the kind of motivation that Mr Canavan put forward. The whole House will welcome the fact that the Lord President of the Court of Session has taken prompt action to dispel rumours about the bench in Scotland.

The conduct of the Scottish judges is entirely a matter for the Lord President of the Court of Session. There is nothing for the Secretary of State for Scotland to say about the matter.

Leading article, page 13

Howe refuses statement on Scottish judge

Calls for a government statement about the resignation of Lord Dervaird as a High Court judge in Scotland after allegations of homosexual behaviour were firmly rejected by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Leader of the House.

Responding to MPs at business questions, he said that the conduct of Scottish judges was entirely a matter for the Lord President of the Court of Session.

Mr Jim Sillars (Glasgow,

Govan, SNP) said that important points of principle concerning civil liberties and the matter of the legal process in Scotland had been raised.

"The issue of civil liberties is whether or not a person who is practising homosexuality within the law should be protected in his office of employment."

"If that was not the case with Lord Dervaird, then we are entitled to a statement on his reasons for resigning."

Advice given by the Lord

Advocate had dragged Lord Hope, Lord President of the Court of Session, from a judgemental to an inquisitorial position which should have been applied by the Lord Advocate, the Crown Office, the Procurator Fiscal.

"Matters of this kind, of important principle, will have to be raised and answered. It is far better that the Government come clean now than for people to believe there is a cover-up."

Sir Geoffrey said that MPs in

most parts of the House would have contempt for the way Mr Sillars had raised the question. The conduct of Scottish judges was not a matter for the House.

Mr Dennis Canavan (Falkirk West, Lab) said that, if a government statement was not forthcoming, the public would rightly suspect that this was yet another establishment cover-up.

Sir Geoffrey: The public has

the good sense not to share the kind of motivation that Mr Canavan put forward. The whole House will welcome the fact that the Lord President of the Court of Session has taken prompt action to dispel rumours about the bench in Scotland.

The conduct of the Scottish judges is entirely a matter for the Lord President of the Court of Session. There is nothing for the Secretary of State for Scotland to say about the matter.

Leading article, page 13

Cash for safety study

The Department of Transport is providing half the money for research commissioned by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust into actual and perceived risks to personal security of passengers travelling in London minibuses compared with travel in licensed taxis. Mr Michael Portillo, Minister for Public Transport, said in a written reply. The research would also consider whether licensing of minibuses, as practised outside London, altered the position.

He said that there would be a ceiling of £20,500 on the Government contribution, a condition and the trust and the Police Foundation were jointly seeking additional funds from the private sector to meet the other part of the funding.

Shipping hope

There are encouraging signs that the worst of the decline in world shipping in recent years is over, Mr Patrick McLoughlin, Minister for Shipping, said.

Gallows kept

A gallows is kept at Wandsworth Prison, Mr David Meller, Minister of State, Home Office, said.

Parliament

next week

The main business in the House of Commons next week is expected to be:

Monday: Social Security Bill, second reading.

Tuesday: Debate on the Chancellor's Autumn Statement.

Wednesday: Debates on Opposition motions on government schools policies and on the needs of the disabled.

Thursday: Motions on Scottish housing support grant Orders, Private Bills.

Friday: Private member's Bill: Consumer Guarantees Bill, second reading.

The main business in the House of Lords is expected to be:

Monday: Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Bill, committee.

Tuesday: Courts and Legal Services Bill, committee, second day.

Wednesday: Debates on London's traffic problems and on the situation in Hong Kong.

Thursday: Courts and Legal Services Bill, committee, third day.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Debate on a Conservative MP's motion on Opposition policies.

Inquiry into security at bases

The Commons defence committee has launched an investigation into the Government's policy of hiring commercial security firms to guard military bases (Sheila Gunn writes).

It comes after controversy after the bombing of the Royal Marines school near Deal, Kent, last September when it emerged that responsibility for external security had been handed over 18 months before to a private firm. The IRA bomb killed 11 people and injured 22.

The Government rejected calls for an urgent security review because, it said, a review of all its sites, including the Royal Marines school, was already under way.

The Tory-dominated committee, chaired by Mr Michael Bates, said yesterday that the investigation will focus initially on the security implications of using commercial security firms. It will call Ministry of Defence officials, members of the Defence Police Federation and the British Security Industry Association. It is also expected to visit military establishments, including Deal.

The committee has previously investigated security at nuclear bases and the former Royal Ordnance factories.

MP derides 'ineffective' chatline practice code



Mr Forth: Code of practice will help to reduce abuse.

The Government expects a new code of conduct to bring a big cut in the abuse of telephone chatlines, Mr Eric Forth, Under Secretary of State for Industry and Consumer Affairs, said in a Commons adjournment debate on Wednesday night.

MPs from both sides of the House had complained about the use of chatlines for sex purposes and one said that Alexander Bell would turn in his grave if he knew that his invention was being used for such perverted purposes.

People were using their employers' telephones, and young people their parents' and running up four-figure bills.

Opening the debate, Mr Terence Lewis (Worsley, Lab) said that telephone message services should not be

available to subscribers unless they specifically asked to have them.

Moving to such a contracting-in system would kill the chatline and sexline services stone dead because callers would not want to spend their own money on the services.

The proposed code of practice to control the industry would change nothing. It proposed monitoring of multi-line chatline services, age control for those under a certain age and a compensation scheme for those lashed with high bills. If a compensation scheme could overcome the problem of families driven into debt by high bills, he would be the first to say that it should be given a try, but the scheme was ludicrous.

Experience showed that monitoring was extremely difficult. It was almost

impossible to tell the age of girls on the telephone. Any service which could survive only with a compensation scheme was not worth much.

He was particularly concerned by one-to-one lines which involved a girl talking to one man about sex. This corrupted the woman.

"I believe there is a correlation between the institution of these lines over the past four years and the crime being perpetrated against women in the streets." Women who worked on these lines felt corrupted and dirty. Some had said that they felt like verbal prostitutes.

Sir Michael McNair-Wilson (Newbury, C) said that the advertisements pandering to the lowest of human desires. As a shareholder of British Telecom, he derived no pleasure from

private treatment by non-insured patients was practicable. But there were practical dangers that made it a not very attractive alternative. Might he suggest politely that what was in some danger of becoming a vendetta between Lord Bruce-Gardyne and Bupa might now come to a peaceful end?

The Earl of Cathness, Paymaster General, said that since 1980 the number of people covered by private medical insurance had increased by half to about 5.5 million people,

representing approximately a tenth of the population.

The percentage of people aged over 65 was only 5 per cent. When people retired, they often found it difficult to continue their insurance cover because, as their premiums tended to rise, their incomes fell.

It was to overcome the problem of enabling people to maintain their insurance cover in retirement that the Government had introduced tax relief for such cover.

The motion was withdrawn.

Private health care morally inferior, bishop tells peers

The following report of a Lords debate on private health care appeared in later editions yesterday.

The principles of private health care were morally inferior to those of the National Health Service, the Bishop of Manchester, the Right Rev Stanley Booth-Clibborn, told peers. He said that tax relief on insurance contributions by elderly people could blow the NHS apart.

Lord Bruce-Gardyne (C) had opened the debate on his motion calling attention to the case for

tax relief for people aged 65 and over on direct payments to medical practitioners and hospitals for private health care.

He said that the problem with private health schemes, such as Bupa, was that when the elderly needed them most, they were confronted by rapidly rising charges.

It was a subject that aroused more passion than any other he had dealt with in recent years. The rising costs facing the retired left them feeling disappointed and let down. They

found that after they had contributed for many years, the schemes were not really interested when claims started to multiply.

The Bishop of Manchester said that he believed that the Christian attitude had had a profound influence on shaping the NHS in years gone past.

The principles behind private health care were fundamentally different. That was not to say they were bad, but he regarded them as "morally inferior". The growth of private health

care in recent years had already damaged the NHS in many ways. "It draws us away from the great principle of universal provision."

Lord Wigoder (Lib Dem), chairman of Bupa, said that among its 3.25 million subscribers was Lord Bruce-Gardyne. Lord Bruce-Gardyne had written an article in the press which had contained "more misstatements and inaccuracies than any other article I have ever seen on the subject."

His proposal for tax relief for

private treatment by non-insured patients was practicable. But there were practical dangers that made it a not very attractive alternative. Might he suggest politely that what was in some danger of becoming a vendetta between Lord Bruce-Gardyne and Bupa might now come to a peaceful end?

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FRIDAY PAGE

Life after marriage

Britain needs its women workers — now, Audrey Slaughter urges them to be ready for the call

Kate Cosgrove married at 18 after travelling around the archaeological world with her parents. Without an O level to her name, Kate believed herself fortunate to be safely married so young.

Except that marriage is not always such a safe haven. Kate's marriage came apart in her early thirties and, with no obvious means of earning a living to support herself and two young teenage children, stark reality loomed.

Kate is fictitious, the main character of my first novel, *Private View*, but having edited women's magazines for most of my working life and been an agony aunt on another for the past year, I know from readers' letters that her case is all too common.

Indeed, I suppose I was quite like her. I was married for the first time before I was 20, and had two children. Before I was 30 the marriage had broken down. Luckily, I had some skills and my earning power was quite high, but it was still a struggle. How much worse for the Kates of the world.

Of course, many women wed young and stay happily married "ever after". I know some of them and I envy them, but they are rare. Indeed, the statistics paint a dire picture. According to the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys figures for 1989, 50 per cent of young marriages end in divorce, and more than four million marriages are ended by divorce or bereavement — and that does not include separations.

There is no marital partner for 73 per cent of women. Unless a woman has acquired her earning power, it means that often, after a marriage break-up, she will have to take a debilitating, low-paid, unskilled job. Husbands can be made to support children but, as the Prime Minister pointed out this week, some erring husbands have a way of disappearing. Payments often lag behind needs.



Slaughter's progress: on *Peticoat* in the 1960s; (inset left) on *Over 21* in the 1970s and *Working Woman* in the 1980s

It is my fervent belief that very early in a woman's life the gritty truth must be hammered home that she has to be self-reliant. Sometimes I have been accused of being anti-men. Nothing could be further from the truth. Isn't it a greater compliment to a man that you marry because you want him and not his pay packet?

In fact, women are a resourceful bunch. Once they can get over the low self-esteem that any kind of failure incurs, they bounce back, concentrating the things they can do which might

be turned into a commercial talent. But it is not easy for women to work and have a husband and family unless there is some fundamental rethinking in the way we run our lives. Few women make it to the top in their career.

There is now a depressing backlash which is showing that women who wanted to have it all — husband, children, well-paid job — during the enthusiastic Eighties are realizing that what they have is permanent exhaustion. No wonder so many women are

dropping out just as the Government discovers it needs their skills in the workplace.

There must be answers. Perhaps, now that the faithful "market forces" have shown employers that they need female skills, companies will find them. I sent untrained Kate Cosgrove stumbling painfully through the pages of my book. Funny enough, it was a journey of self-discovery that she, and many like her, actually enjoyed.

● *Private View* is published on February 25 by Doubleday (£12.95).

...and rejoining the 'real' world

On Monday "Back to the Future", a drive to boost the number of women returning to work after a career break, will be launched on Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*. The series of broadcasts and conferences, supported by the Employment Department Group, aims to encourage women to "identify their strengths, build confidence, learn how to transfer skills acquired at home to the workplace and take advantage of the right job opportunities".

But is it a case of back to the future or back to the wall for women returners?

To Richardson, MP, Labour's shadow minister for women, is worried that "they are wooing women back as cheap labour" to do jobs that men don't want. "Employers must be made to think about why they're ghettoizing women," she says. "We

have employers, like the banks, which say they've got good, forward-looking policies, but it is only jobs at a certain level that they are encouraging women to fill. We must see equal pay for jobs of equal value, a statutory minimum wage and some kind of support for women who need childcare."

On Tuesday, Edwina Currie asked in the House of Commons what further measures would be taken to encourage the return of women to the workforce. Patrick Nicholson, the Under-Secretary of State for Employment, said: "The Government is encouraging employers to adapt traditional working practices to accommodate the needs of women. This means more flexibility in hours of work, in holidays, job-sharing, career breaks, part-time working and, where possible, help with childcare costs."

Richardson remains sceptical. "In

an employment debate in the mid-1980s, Edwina Currie suggested employers should grab women because they're cheap labour. She was saying — proudly — that women were less demanding and more flexible. That philosophy has helped to continue the sub-category of low-paid women."

Currie says, in reply: "I was merely reporting that male employment fell and female employment increased during the 1980s because women tended to be more flexible. My point was that it was happening, not that it was right and proper."

"But we have moved on. Today, most women work and most mothers are working. But where do we go from here? The Government already subsidizes childcare, though nobody takes advantage of it. Anyone who gets her

employer to pay part of her childcare doesn't have to pay National Insurance on that money, and nor does the employer have to pay it."

Claire Scler-Grey, editor of *Woman's Hour*, says: "The conferences are being organized by the Pepperell Unit of the Industrial Society and are in no way controlled by the Department of Employment. We just want to give women a chance to see what's on offer, for good or bad."

Victoria McKee

● A free booklet is available from "Back to the Future", BBC, Broadcasting House, London W1A 1AA (enclose an A4 SAE) and a free Helpline (0800 100 900) will be available on the days of the broadcasts. Listen to *Woman's Hour* (2 pm, Radio 4, Monday) for further details. The March issue of *Good Housekeeping* will also include a free booklet for women returning to work.

How to hijack decent causes

Did you read last Monday's *Times* interview with Nina Temple, the new general secretary of the Communist Party of Great Britain? It was rather a warm piece, I felt, a woman-to-woman thing. One could sense the shared home truths as author Victoria Glendinning chatted with this "lively... articulate, outgoing, optimistic and youngest general secretary to date" in the few moments before Miss Temple dashed off to nursery school to collect her children. Not one cloud on the horizon as Miss Glendinning viewed the new female face of the British Communist Party.

Ah, well, I thought. If only the National Front had had sense enough to choose as its leader a happy young woman from a north London comprehensive, given to ethnic earrings and breast-feeding, rather than John Tyndall, that awful man with no eyelashes to speak of and a taste for jackboots.

"Everyone wants to meet Nina Temple," began Miss Glendinning. Well, perhaps. Miss Temple had condemned the invasion of Czechoslovakia ("not at the time — I was only 11 — but on the tenth anniversary...") and made it perfectly clear that she did not like Stalin, Brezhnev or "the old Bolshevik model of centralism, discipline and class war". This is exciting stuff and one can hear the clink of glasses as Miss Glendinning and Miss Temple give the heave-ho to all that stuff. The new general secretary is "ditching, for a start, the old Leninist structure of the British CP", which couldn't be more welcomed. Still, this is where the tricky business begins. What is it in Marxism-Leninism that Miss Temple is not ditching?

Well, Karl Marx, for one thing, although Miss Temple, being on close terms, just calls him Karl. "As Karl said, 'it is people that make history,'" says Miss Temple. I actually don't know of anyone who thinks that anything else does, but I let that pass. But, if Miss Temple is stuck with Karl, well, that gives us the Communist Manifesto for a beginning, and I do think that might be rather troubling. Miss Temple herself is clear-eyed about the whole awkward business of "reclaiming" Communism. "If the name is too much of a



BARBARA AMIEL

barrier it can't be reclaimed," she explains. "I have an idealistic idea of Communism as a splendid thing. Christians didn't give up because of the Inquisition."

This, I think, is where I might have got up from Miss Temple's feet. The Christians, I would have murmured, did have certain things going for them before the Inquisition. They had, for example, Jesus Christ and St Thomas Aquinas. I am not a religious person, you understand, but the Sermon on the Mount and the Communist Manifesto just aren't in the same boat. I

'What is it that Miss Temple is not ditching?'

took the precaution of re-reading the Communist Manifesto, as well as a bit of Engels, and I just don't see a way out. The line from Marx to the Gulag is as straight and inevitable as the line from *Mein Kampf* to the concentration camps. As eco-pure as the word "reclaim" may be, I just don't see how one can reclaim Nazism or Communism, except for those people forever prey to the totalitarian temptation.

The interview is important for that very reason. Human evil is unlikely to die with the destruction of the "evil empire". After all, evil did not end when Adolf Hitler finally did one right thing in his bunker and finished himself off. Where will all the envy, intolerance, and other deadly sins go now that the world is

facing its post-Communist phase?

Miss Temple sees the new Communist Party as "a force which is feminist and green". This is the answer, I think. The totalitarian impulse is a parasite one which needs a host body — and it thrives on decent causes. It was, after all, a perfectly decent notion that people should not be down-trodden or exploited, just as the nationalist notion that groups should have their own autonomy was decent enough. Both were hijacked by totalitarianism.

The central themes of feminism and the greens, that women should have equality and that we should clean up the mess we make, are legitimate causes. They are indeed the popular causes of our time, and madmen need to be in tune with the *Zeitgeist* to achieve their ends. We have had red, black and brown fascism. Perhaps the time has come for the green version, as practised by both the zealots of the environment and those of fundamentalist Islam. Some of today's militant eco-freaks do remind one of the great wandering youth movements who, with their Rousseauism and an intolerance for modernism, were the precursors of the modern Nazis.

Miss Glendinning, of course, is no totalitarian. She is, apart from being a splendidly talented biographer, a member of that literary intelligentsia whose ordering principle is contempt — contempt for vulgarity, contempt for materialism, contempt for those whose lives are lived on a less spiritual plane of existence than hers. That, I think, rather than envy, was behind her notable statement in the *Observer* in the 1987 election campaign, when she said she was "far more shocked" by Mrs Thatcher's policies than by those of the extreme Left.

Miss Glendinning sees the shabby clutter of the offices of the Communist Party of Great Britain, with jars of homemade chutney and "an antiquated tea-urn", as "all very sympathetic and English". Well, yes. But I remember that Adolf Hitler was not personally corrupt, and preferred simple surroundings most of his life. A shared aesthetic does not guarantee a shared categorical imperative.

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THE TIMES

Future greens

Damian Rundle's book *Teaching Green* (Green Print, £7.95) is useful for both teachers and parents, showing ways of encouraging eco-consciousness among school children by incorporating "green" matters into the curriculum — and, at the same time, into play. There are examples of games and projects — such as constructing a robot-like puppet from discarded cans, or "musical rain forests" — which aim to satisfy children's needs on every level: emotional, physical and intellectual. Rundle also produces a bi-monthly, non-profit publication, *Green Teacher*, which focuses on topics such as global education, green music teaching and practical solar power, and acts as a forum for teachers at every level to exchange and share classroom experiences, theories and ideas on how to incorporate green ideas into the lives of students of all ages. Individual UK subscriptions are £10 a year, with discounts for multiple subscriptions by colleges and schools. Contact *Green Teacher* at Machynlleth, Powys, Wales SY20 8DN (0654 2141).

Peeling off

Scientists at the Argonne Laboratory in the United States have evolved what may turn out to be the ultimate biodegradable plastic — created from potato peelings. A viable product made from it should be available in the shops within three years. There are also plans to transform other natural products — including corn, sorghum, wheat and even cheese whey — into alternatives to present-day plastics.

Tree beauty

Montagne Jeunesse is a range of cruelty-free, natural beauty products available through most supermarkets. All the

ECOSPHERE

News on environmental issues

products are packaged attractively in recycled glass bottles with cork stoppers, and are scented with natural fragrances such as lime, orchid, vanilla and passionfruit. Prices start at 99p for soaps, and at the moment Montagne Jeunesse is running an on-pack "Rainforest Appeal", promising to donate a percentage of profits to preserve the world's rainforests.

World power

Anyone with a computer, a modem and an inquiring mind can now be part of GreenNet, a global communications network established to facilitate the free exchange of environmental information. Most subscribers are organizations involved in environmental and peace movements, and membership enables them to gather data from around the globe on anything from acid rain to the Star Wars satellite missile programme, via electronic mail and a database of organizations, news clippings, newsletters, government reports, and so on. The rock musician Peter Gabriel, an avid supporter, declares: "Information is power. It is time to take it into the hands and homes of those working to improve the world." Subscribers are asked to make a £30 deposit, there is a minimum monthly charge of £5, and connected time costs 9p per minute; the service is priced to put it within the grasp of struggling environmental groups. Members can also use GreenNet's desktop publishing facilities and obtain computer equipment at favourable prices. For details contact GreenNet at 26 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ.

Josephine Fairley

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TIMES DIARY

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

Will Mrs Thatcher have to hand the teapots back? Shortly after her election in 1979, Lord Brownlow, owner of Belton House, close to her birthplace of Grantham, lent a set of silver for use in the state dining room at 10 Downing Street during Mrs Thatcher's premiership. But in 1984, after the Prime Minister had won her second term, Belton House was handed over to the National Trust, and with it went the ownership of the silver. Labour's Dennis Skinner, almost a piece of English heritage himself these days, asked Mrs Thatcher on Wednesday when she intended to return the silver, "for the benefit of the nation". She replied that it would be returned "as and when requested by the National Trust".

Skinner thinks this should happen immediately. It is bad for tourism, he says, if "people visiting stately homes discover the fine silver which should be on display is hidden away behind the pearly gates of Downing Street". A spokesman for the National Trust said it would be "delighted" to have the silver back, but that it would not make any formal request while Mrs Thatcher remained in Downing Street. And before anyone starts making silly jokes about 30 pieces of silver, the Prime Minister makes it clear in her answer. It is 22 pieces.

Americans have been treated to their first live broadcasts from the Commons, and according to the weekly journal, *The New Republic*, phone lines to the television company have been jammed by viewers. Accustomed to rude and slovenly spoken Congressmen, they have been ringing to express appreciation of "elected representatives speaking so beautifully". Could they mean, perhaps, Jack Cunningham ("shut up, you fool", *Hansard*, January 9) or Andrew Faulds ("ignorant twat", *Hansard*, January 11)?

One are the days when the secret of success in the Tory party was to do with birth and breeding. The accepted passport to high-flying has, I learn, become an invitation to address the supper club run by Rob Hayward in his Kingswood constituency. Last May, Hayward fixed up three speakers for his 1990 programme — the backbencher John Redwood, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, John Major, and the junior minister, Michael Howard. As a result of his skilful talent-spotting, Hayward's lucky constituents will now be addressed by a trade minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Employment. Ambitious Tories are anxiously awaiting Hayward's next invitation list. The less career-minded are asking for a tip in the 3.30 at Market Rasen.

BARRY FANTONI



"In migration, m'lad, may I say how much that wig suits you"

Thirty years after he entered the Commons and was officially upbraided by Tory elders for wearing suede shoes, Julian Critchley has been voted the best dressed statesman in Britain. He received his prize yesterday on the Commons terrace, a trouser press from the Corby manufacturer that sponsored the award, based on a poll of MPs' secretaries. But they are a fickle and disloyal lot. Scarcely any of them thought their own bosses smart enough to vote for.

Colin Moynihan builds houses for Rotherham "announces a press release from the Department of the Environment, where the Sports Minister also has responsibilities. If he ever loses his parliamentary seat a useful second career clearly awaits."

Only one Tory MP has made it into the top 20 of those asking the most parliamentary questions in the last session. So I asked the Pembroke MP, Nicholas Bennett, to explain himself. Tabling more than 400 questions to hard-pressed ministers in one session, surely, was not the way to endear oneself to the party whips. Bennett explained that despite his high tally, few of his questions caused the Government difficulties; most were designed to embarrass Labour. But how, I wondered in my simple way, could questions to ministers embarrass the Opposition? There were ways, Bennett told me mysteriously, that manage to stay within the rules — just.

It may not make more than a footnote, nor much of a footnote at that, but when the history of these remarkable times comes to be written, my name could well find itself being bandied about.

Let us imagine we are eagerly gobbling our way through the forthcoming Volume XI of *The Oxford History of Soviet Post-Imperialism*. On page 932, there is a Polaroid photograph. Its caption reads: "Prokurator-Elekt Tadeusz Wojcik (left) and soon-to-be Lord Supreme Miroslaw Orzechowski, seen here enjoying a joke on December 17, 1989. The portrait Wojcik is pointing at is believed to be of Alan Coren, an unknown Englishman."

Only a guess, of course. But on the three or four occasions that I have sidled into the bar of the Polish Club in Princes Gate to

Yugoslavia is the forgotten East European socialist country. It did not figure in the spectacle of the 1989 revolutions and is still governed by an unreconstructed communist party. Only Albania shares this dubious distinction.

It is almost certain, however, that Yugoslavia will now bend to the wind of change, internal as well as external, and confine its admittedly idiosyncratic socialism to the joint East European dustbin of socialist failures. Many in Yugoslavia hope that this will be the outcome of the 14th Extraordinary Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, which begins in Belgrade tomorrow.

The Declaration of the League of Communists, the document to be put to delegates, is as radical a denunciation of the past as anything produced by communists elsewhere in Eastern Europe. It states that the League will fight for a democratic socialist alternative in the conditions of free association of citizens. "There exists," the document asserts, "no higher historic, state or class aim than the dignity of man." And it adds that there are no older rights and freedoms than man's individual

John Zametica on Yugoslavia's peculiar difficulties with reform

Tito's backward children

rights and freedoms, something which the state must protect, not violate. "With political pluralism," the declaration continues, "we are gaining a new quality of life... There is no people power without free political organization."

Indeed, after 45 wasted years of tinkering with social and economic relationships, of pioneering and experimenting with various but invariably silly socialist ideas and practices, the Yugoslav communists have brought the country to the edge of economic catastrophe and political disintegration.

For those who wonder why it has taken the Yugoslavs so long to begin facing reality, when they had been free of Soviet tutelage ever since the 1948 Tito-Stalin break, it is important to emphasize that Yugoslavia had an authentic socialist revolution. Tito commented once that other East European communist leaders arrived in their countries

after the war in Soviet aircraft, smoking their pipes. The relative ease with which the East Europeans have got rid of their communist masters is due largely to the fact that in their countries there had never been much historic support for communism.

In Yugoslavia, a bloody civil war resulted in a triumphant communist party led by the charismatic Tito, whose regime did not have to rely on the support of Moscow and which, while always ruthless in eliminating political opposition, also developed the image of itself as "acceptable", through the opening of the country's borders, and through being more open to the West because of economic necessity and non-membership of the Soviet bloc. Given these factors it is not surprising that, inside the country and in the West, the regime could count on support.

After Tito's death in 1980 the Yugoslavs increasingly began to

perceive socialism as at best an illusion, at worst a bluff. They now see this displayed in both the economic and political spheres. The economic situation really requires little comment — the inflation rate is 3,000 per cent and rising. At least the federal government, led by the intelligent and energetic Anton Markovic, is trying to implement radical measures. The Yugoslav dinar has, since the beginning of the year, been a convertible currency, and plans are under way to open stock markets in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana. The government, in short, has understood and embraced the idea that only free-market competition can save the economy. Yugoslavia has in this sense already gone further than any other East European country.

But politically the country is divided on national and ideological grounds. The ideological divisions are between the conser-

vative forces, largely confined to Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia, and reformists in the ranks of communists of Croatia and particularly Slovenia. Both Croatia and Slovenia are already pledged to multi-party elections for their local assemblies this spring. Serbia has been much slower here, though her democratic traditions are probably unmatched in Eastern Europe. Another citadel of conservatism is the army, on whose behalf various spokesmen have stated that it is in favour of political pluralism so long as this does not mean a multi-party system.

The national divisions are those between Serbs and almost everybody else in Yugoslavia: Serbs and Croats (a traditional conflict); Serbs and Slovenes (there is a trade war going on between Serbia and Slovenia); Serbs and Bosnian Muslims (these Muslims are permanently fearful of Serbs); and Serbs and

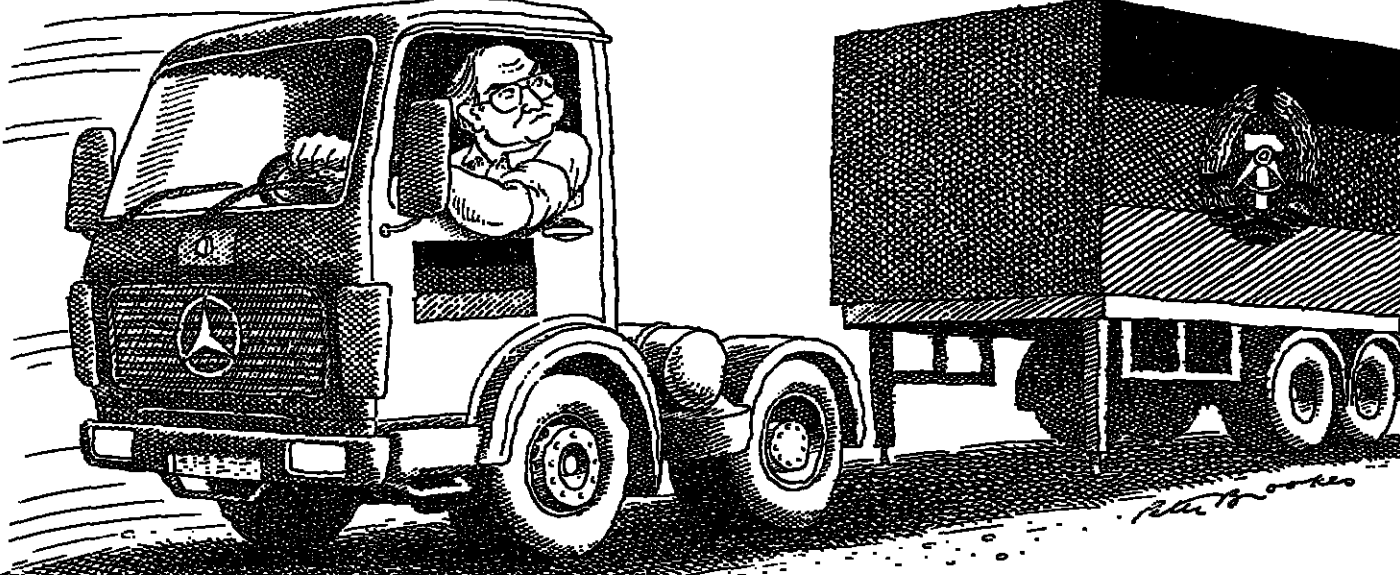
ethnic Albanians from Kosovo province. This last conflict is particularly important. Serbs have encountered almost no sympathy in Yugoslavia (let alone abroad) in their struggle to stem the tide of Albanian chauvinism in a province which is the cradle of the Serbian medieval state and civilization. This extreme state and civilization. This extreme state and civilization. This extreme state and civilization.

The Milosevic regime in Serbia is being accused elsewhere in Yugoslavia of "neo-Bolshevism". The forthcoming communist congress in Belgrade will not doubt test this proposition. The chances are, however, that Serbs will jump on the democratic bandwagon. That will not in itself, of course, eliminate all the problems of Yugoslav politics and economics. But a good start would be made if free elections to the federal assembly were called immediately, if the federal government were given even more powers to put the economy right, and if Serbia were finally given some real support by the other republics over Kosovo.

The author is a historian and specialist on the Balkans.

All roads lead to German unity

Lord Weidenfeld
urges the West to
face the inevitable
and help forge a
unified state



they come close to what is now urgently needed — a route map and timetable for the coalescing of the two states.

As soon as the will of the majority of Germans can manifestly be documented by election or plebiscite, the first stage — the contractual relationship between Bonn and East Berlin — is wholly within the power of the Germans themselves. The two sovereign states can harmonize a massive bulk of legislation, charting a thousand ways in which the Germans can coalesce into one society.

The second stage — confederation — is also largely within the power of the German people. Of course, the inter-allied status of West Berlin prevents a wholesale move of ministries from Bonn to West Berlin, with the resultant convenience of contiguity with East Berlin, but basically a loose confederative structure which does not abolish sovereignty or change the frontiers on the map drawn at Potsdam can be achieved without international sanction. As Bonn will sooner or later solemnly acknowledge the inviolability of the Oder-Neisse

frontier with Poland, the border with Czechoslovakia and the cession of East Prussia to the Soviet Union, her Eastern neighbours cannot unduly complain.

The outstanding road block — defence — can probably be bypassed in a confederative structure. Even an undiminished Nato presence on West German soil would not be incompatible with a Soviet presence on East German soil. The future of the Warsaw Pact, if we are to take some leading Soviet experts at their word, lies more in safeguards through surveillance and bases rather than intensive co-operation with conscript armies of countries with non-communist or anti-communist governments.

It is only when we approach the third and final stage of unification — the fusion of both states into one Federal Republic within the EC — that international treaties are manifestly relevant. By that stage — the mid 1990s? — America and the Soviet Union will surely have redefined the nature of the alliances; the EC will have tested the early workings of the single

market and a new relationship with Efta and the former Soviet satellites will be more clearly formulated.

The prevailing view of Mrs Thatcher and President Mitterrand, among other European leaders, is to delay the moment of decision in the vague hope that something might occur to deflect the will of Germans to unite. M Delors wants the German nation to be embedded in Europe, though he would prefer to find two births rather than one in the Community.

The dangers inherent in a policy of imprecision, evasion and "masterly inactivity" are probably more real than the unspecified apprehensions about an aggrandized Germany, for delay might have an irreparably damaging impact on the German psyche. The German Federal Republic has, since its inception, been a loyal partner in the reconstruction of Europe, its leaders fulfilling the terms of peace and erecting an admirable edifice of democracy based on the rules of law. Why should an incremental strengthening of Germany through federation be a menace to peace? Perhaps

recent history and demography can sway the fearful.

With a sharply declining birth rate, the Germans will, at the end of this century, scarcely be more populous than they are today. There is thus no need for "living space", nor any desire for repopulating lost territories.

A striking feature of West German post-war history has been a conscious, as well as instinctive, aversion to militarism among German youth. Considering that Germany has contracted twice territorially (1918 and 1945) and lost whole provinces, the Federal Republic has fewer elements of right-wing extremism than, say, France or Italy.

The economic and social upsurge of the EC and its member nations should quench fears of a united Germany's disproportionate strength. Any two of the major EC countries combined could rival a united Germany. As the EC expands, Germany's shareholding in the European equity will be diluted.

As we watch anxiously President Gorbachev's Herculean efforts to keep the Soviet empire from disintegration, we should

reflect that if there is one country which could focus its inventiveness and skills and, aided by the West and Japan, take the lead in helping to rebuild the infrastructure of Russia, it is Germany.

Another valid reason for the support of German unification is the long-term danger in preserving a separate eastern state. The genesis, record, ethos and prospects of the second German state all bode ill: it bears the birthmark of Stalinism. For two decades it produced impressive industrial results, but just as the commanding officer of British prisoners prided himself on building the best bridge over the River Kwai, so the East Germans took pride in creating a powerful industrial base in the Soviet sphere while yearning for freedom. Time and again the Ulbricht and Honecker regime claimed that the sole *raison d'être* of a second German state was its superior Marxist-Leninist system. Now that that system has gone, why should East Germans not join their kith and kin in the West?

By the middle of the 1990s the Federal Republic, barring unforeseen events, will have completed half a century of a civil society built by enlightened men. If, then, unity were to crown this achievement, moderation must be seen to triumph. After the First World War, had Britain and France shown a fraction of the compassionate understanding to such moderate men as Rathenau, Stresemann or Brüning which they later lavished on Papen, Ribbentrop and Hitler, we might have been spared a Third Reich and a Second World War. Those who still have a nightmarish vision of a Fourth Reich might banish their fears and put their trust in the enduring continuity of the moral standards set by such humane pragmatists as Adenauer and Heuss, Brandt and Weizsäcker, and in the younger generation of Germans of goodwill.

When Samuel Smiles goes back in the box

Robert Kilroy-Silk asks why Mrs Thatcher's ideology stops at Ford

So Mrs Thatcher and the Tories have not changed their spots after all: they are still on the side of the rich and successful and against the less well-off and the poor. How else can we explain the Prime Minister's almost hysterical condemnation of the demands of hourly paid Ford workers for a pay increase in excess of the 10.2 per cent offered by the company, while she maintains an eloquent silence about excessive increases in top people's pay and profits?

The Prime Minister takes credit for having ushered in a new era in which the ethics of the market place take precedence over all else. We live in a hard, competitive world, she repeatedly reminds us. Nothing is owed to us, nothing belongs to us of right. It all has to be earned. Our duty as individuals is to be ambitious, competitive, hard-working, to "get on", as she and Alderman Roberts did. The Prime Minister insists that we must stand on our own feet, make our own decisions, take

responsibility for our own lives and that of our family. She is the unshakable, unequivocal and unquestioning champion of the notion that individuals must put their own interests first at all times. Neither Adam Smith nor Samuel Smiles was ever so crude.

Mrs Thatcher has never demonstrated a scintilla of doubt about her message. She has no guilt about its sometimes evil social consequences; indeed, believes there are none. She truly and sincerely believes that what she advocates is best for the individual and for the country.

Success goes to the brave and the ambitious. They are today's heroes. The Prime Minister and her acolytes in the media applaud the aggressive go-getter; shower admiration on the biggest profit-makers. They fawn over those with an eye for the main chance, who demonstrate business acumen, entrepreneurial flair. They are awarded Queen's Awards for services to

exports, receive peerages and knighthoods for enriching themselves, and others. There is nothing wrong, Mrs Thatcher tells us, in wanting to make money. Not only is it justified in itself, it is also, she insists, virtuous. The possession of money not only enables us to make provisions for the health, education, and welfare of our family, but it also provides employment for others. We all benefit. We should all be at it.

It is not then surprising that not one government minister utters a single word of protest at the way in which millions of pounds are made, not earned, in a few moments on the Stock Exchange; that none jibs when shares in newly privatised businesses are sold at a quick profit without effort — or contribution to productivity — on the part of the beneficiaries. There was not a murmur from Downing Street, and no hectoring from the

dispatch box in the Commons either, when water shares changed hands for a quick 50 per cent profit.

Nor, for that matter, were there any rumblings of discontent, still less of distaste, when massive profits were being made in the City. I cannot recall a government minister suggesting that those throwing champagne parties, driving expensive cars and buying overpriced Dockland penthouses should be moderate and responsible.

But then, why should anyone say such a thing? That, after all, was what life was supposed to be about: making money and having a good time. That's fine. But if there is to be a free-for-all, then, as one union leader had cause to say a few years ago, we should all be part of the all.

Well, if you are a working person organized in a trade union, you are not. Different rules apply to them. Others can be selfish, self-seeking, but not

the hourly paid Ford workers. The moment they attempt to sell their labour in the free market and allow its price to be determined by the laws of supply and demand, they are subjected to a torrent of abuse and advice from the Prime Minister and her minions in Parliament and the Press. The Prime Minister exhorts them to be responsible and moderate and warns of the dangers of inflationary pay settlements. The Employment Secretary, Michael Howard, has the temerity to announce that it is time to "behave sensibly".

It really is extraordinary. No one was enjoined to be moderate, responsible and sensible when working people were quiescent and all around them were getting rich. How many in the Tory party told Nigel Lawson he was "fuelling inflation", or acting against the national interest, when he doled out lavish tax cuts to the already rich?

Yet the workers at Ford are now being made to look evil — saboteurs of the national pay average — and all because they are doing what Mrs Thatcher did when she sold her house in Chelsea: attempting to obtain the best price for their main asset.

"You can't buck the market," the Prime Minister told us recently. Then why are the Ford employees being subjected to a Wilsonite/Callaghanesque exhortation to show restraint? Why should they impose a self-discipline exercised by no other group? Why, indeed, are they expected to impose a voluntary pay cut upon themselves, and so be able to make less provision for the welfare of their families? It was not asked of doctors, policemen, firemen, or MPs — none of whom can show the productivity or profit produced by Ford workers.

The Ford workers should go ahead with their claim unless the Prime Minister can offer the alternative of a fair society. The trouble is, she does not know the meaning of "fairness", and denies the existence of "society".

Drawn, unhung and quarterless



ALAN COREN

already know why it was hanging there in the first place, I shall not bother to explain that it was painted by the ravishing Basha Kaczmarowska, whom I mistakenly, last September, thought was

inviting me up to her studio not to see her etchings, but who was in fact frantically trawling sitters for her upcoming exhibition and needed something bald and jowling to make up the set. That is how I wound up leering from a nail in the Polish Club.

Where I should have stayed, even if only in the cellar. For as soon as I put my key in the door and the portrait dived in the hall, I knew that I had no idea where to hang it. It is life-size, it dominates. Wherever I put it in the house, it would be making a statement. All of those statements would invite speculation of the highest order, and derision of the lowest. You cannot hang a life-

size simulacrum of yourself in the hall, because it says *Welcome to Megalomania Towers*; you cannot hang it in the living-room, because it says *Hallo, I Am A Conversation Piece, Would You Like To Say Something About Me?*; you cannot hang it in the dining-room, because it says *Have You Noticed How My Eyes Follow You Round The Soup?*; you cannot hang it in the bedroom, because she says *There's Nothing Going On Between You And This Polish Bimbo, Is There?*

I spent most of the weekend creeping into rooms, locking the door, hammering in hooks as softly as I could, hanging the

painting, standing back, taking it down, piercing the hooks out as softly as I could, unlocking the door, and creeping out again.

For the plain fact is that the hanging of a portrait suggests an act of reverence on someone's part, and if that someone is oneself, there are, obviously, more kicks than ha'pence in it. You need a sign underneath informing the gawper that this portrait has been paid for by voluntary subscription raised by loyal troopers of the 17th/21st Uhlands, or lion members of the Amalgamated Union of Cobblers, or the grateful boys of St Nottie's.

Unable to front up any of those, I can see only one solution. First brass engraver to run up *Removed From The Polish Club By Democratic Decision*. If nothing else, it catches the spirit of the times.



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ABOVE SUSPICION

The resignation of a Scottish judge for reasons associated with the practice of homosexuality raises a number of fundamental questions both about the level of probity demanded of public figures, and about the morality and acceptability of homosexuality. If homosexual activity is regarded as shameful, a judge who indulges in it in secret will be open to the possibility of blackmail, either for the extraction of money or, more dangerously for the public interest, for the inducement of a judicial favour. And the respect in which the judiciary ought to be held could be undermined, even held up to ridicule.

Attitudes to homosexuality remain confused and contradictory. There was a major shift of public feeling in the 1950s and 1960s, which resulted in the removal, with some exceptions, of criminal sanction against adult homosexual activity in private. Public attitudes have not, however, moved to the opposite extreme. The equivalence of homosexual and heterosexual activity is not recognized in either English or Scottish law. Homosexual activity remains a criminal offence in the armed services; the age limits below which sexual intercourse becomes criminal are different; there are different limits to what may be done lawfully in public. And local government authorities are prohibited from advancing the view that homosexual relations are morally equivalent to heterosexual relations.

The law's disapproval of homosexuality is by and large supported by public opinion. Public conduct — kissing, holding hands — which would be thought unremarkable in couples of the opposite sex can still give offence when displayed between couples of the same sex. In the minds of many people, the stigma associated with the word "unnatural" still applies.

For these reasons it is only realistic to accept that an active homosexual must run a certain risk of blackmail, all the more so if he occupies a sensitive position in society. A distinction has been proposed in the Scottish case between homosexual behaviour which is confined to a discreet and stable relationship, and that which is not, a distinction familiar from debates within the Church of England and Church of Scotland. There may or may not be theological merit in preferring homosexual liaisons to

correspond as closely as possible to the Christian ideal of heterosexual marriage, but it does not have much relevance to the risk of blackmail.

Anyone who fears his private arrangements being made public, whatever they are, is open to pressure from someone who is prepared to do just that. This necessarily introduces a degree of moral relativity into the debate: an entertainer, for instance, would be less vulnerable to such pressure, because the general expectations would be different in that case. Expectations are bound to be stricter when someone's public duties explicitly involve them in upholding moral standards, a principle which applies as much to the clergy as to judges. The more senior the position the greater the expectation will be. A judge necessarily has less freedom than his clerk in these matters, a clerk less than a layman.

Most people would agree that a judge is in this category, and is therefore to be expected to behave much more conventionally and conservatively than men in most other walks of life. And as long as that is the case, it is not advisable for senior judicial appointments to be offered to practising homosexuals, or for them to be accepted. Even grounds for strong suspicion and scandal-mongering need to be avoided. Sad though it may be in its impact on individuals, the maintenance of public confidence in the judiciary, which demands a stern defence of the dignity and respect due to members of it, is overwhelmingly more important.

The presence of a homosexual inclination or preference is not by itself criminal, sinful or scandalous, and therefore no bar to office of any kind, whether it is hidden or admitted. It is really nobody's business. But the distinction between inclination and conduct is a valid one. A married heterosexual need not be ashamed of a mere inclination or attraction towards members of the opposite sex, provided he remains faithful to his marriage vows. To translate inclination into action, in such a case, is to cross a very big line. It is not unreasonable to apply the analogy to a homosexual. It is a distinction the public already accepts and understands.

MR HURD'S CHINESE PUZZLE

No sooner had the Government braved opposition on its own back benches to announce last month that 50,000 heads of household in Hong Kong would be granted the right to reside in the United Kingdom, than the political barometer in Peking gave warning of stormy weather to come. This week the cloud finally burst: a Chinese official on the drafting committee for the future Basic Law declared that, under Chinese rule, British passport-holders would be debarred from public office and deprived of British consular protection.

It is to be hoped that Peking's decision is not final. The time which has still to elapse before the colony passes into Chinese hands may be sufficient for a reversal of the return to Maoist orthodoxy which has prevailed since the Tiananmen Square massacre.

The Government must, of course, make its dispositions with an eye to the worst possible case, and there can be no doubt that Peking's hostile stance, supported as it is by overwhelming military force, does change the situation very considerably. The Chinese do not seem to have grasped that the policy being pursued by the British Government represents a compromise between those who wanted all Hong Kong Chinese to receive British passports and those who wanted none to do so. It was the least that could be done to discharge our moral responsibilities.

To have granted such rights to fewer people, or to none, would merely have ensured that Hong Kong's best talents would despair of help from Britain and seek the first opportunity to emigrate elsewhere. To have offered rights of residence to most of the colony's inhabitants might well have provoked a more fearsome retribution than that threatened by Tory backwoodsmen or the leadership of the Labour Party.

Quite apart from the entertaining domestic sideshow of Mr Tebbitt's rebels, who currently appear to be making common cause with Peking, the Government is now faced with two seemingly irreconcilable tasks. It must simultaneously reassure Hong Kong, where it is

accused of irresolution and of drawing invidious distinctions between citizens, and mainland China, where the charge is one of breaking the letter of the Sino-British accords.

The Foreign Secretary made a creditable start in reconciling these contradictory aims with his well-received visit to the colony this week, during which he convinced them that promises once made will be kept. Not only the magnates, but the broad middle classes of Hong Kong quietly saluted Mr Hurd's moral courage in nailing his political colours to the mast of limited dual citizenship. The atmosphere had evidently changed since last year, when Sir Geoffrey Howe sought in vain to allay fears that the colony was being abandoned to its fate.

It will, though, be necessary for the Prime Minister herself to lend her authority to the present undertakings. A visit by her to the colony later this year would strengthen the fragile recovery of confidence there. Such a visit would need to be well-prepared. Above all, it would need to be carefully timed to coincide with a diplomatic offensive, concerted with Britain's allies and friends abroad, to put pressure on Peking.

China's present leadership needs little encouragement to retreat into a siege mentality; hence inducements must be kept in reserve to tempt the dragon out of its lair. Since the Hong Kong question has implications for the whole European Community, this is an issue on which a much stronger line from the Council of Ministers would not come amiss. The United States could also offer valuable help. The Prime Minister — who did not hesitate to lend moral support to Washington over Panama — should not be too proud to ask for it.

By seeking to deny Hong Kong a fair and necessary safeguard, Peking has raised the stakes. It is now for Mrs Thatcher to rise to the occasion, which is nothing less than the postscript to the unfinished history of the British Empire.

PLAYING THE GAME

Mr Mike Gatting and his team of English cricketers start their tour of South Africa today amid conditions of almost unprecedented security. The Mass Democratic Movement and its allies may see this as a victory for their cause, but are they really serving their best interests? The widespread disruptive campaign which has been planned could well damage the very ideal they are embracing.

The first argument concerns multiracial sport. There can be little doubt that the international sports boycott has had a profound effect upon the country. Few other measures could have produced such a sense of isolation among the white minority, and the result has been progress towards multiracial sport. Mr AH Bacher, managing director of the South African Cricket Union — and the man behind the present "rebel" tour — deserves credit for his efforts. There is still a long way to go before the black and white people in South Africa have equal sporting opportunities and facilities, but the situation has substantially improved.

If South Africans are to move further, however, there must be carrots as well as sticks. In fact, the only reward for their achievement has been a cynical indifference from their critics, who say there can be no relaxation until apartheid has been totally dismantled — "No normal sport in an abnormal society".

By moving the goalposts, however, those critics have lost sight of their original objective. At the International Cricket Conference a year ago, the more militant cricketing

countries represented would not even entertain a British proposal that an investigative mission be sent to South Africa to see for itself what progress had been made. There are actually fewer sporting contacts now than there were when games were entirely segregated. The result of such a negative approach is to discourage those who are trying to respond.

Another argument against these demonstrations is that they could delay political progress. President F. W. de Klerk has made significant strides towards ending the injustice of racial segregation. Next month on the resumption of Parliament in Cape Town he is expected to announce further moves towards a political settlement, perhaps lighting the way towards a dialogue with the African National Congress. For the Mass Democratic Movement to divert attention from these political developments towards the street theatre and violence of the past could turn back the clock to the disadvantage of everyone except perhaps the ultra-conservative right.

The motives of Messrs Gatting and company may well be mixed. No doubt the lure of money most attracted those in the twilight of their playing days. Young and not-so-young knew the penalties they faced, however, and no doubt reached a finely-balanced decision. However that may be, the occasional unofficial tour of South Africa might now seem a fitting response in the changed circumstances. The resumption of such occasional sporting contacts should be encouraged, not seen as a political *caveat* *belli*.

Union's view of Aerospace strikes

From the President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union
Sir, Your footballing headline "Mr Jordan's own goal" (your editorial, January 11) fits in well with the partisan contents. Lord Dowding's letter (January 13) equally fails to examine both sides of the argument.

M Pierson, Chief Executive of Airbus Industrie, whose complaints about British Aerospace's mismanagement of the claim are justified, obviously knows more about the history of the engineers' dispute than you are prepared to acknowledge.

He knows that a year and four months have passed since the engineering unions lodged their claim for the 35-hour week; knows that eight months of negotiation with the EEF (Engineering Employers' Federation) culminated in the rejection by them of an exceptionally constructive proposal of a two-year agreement that gave two hours off the working week for all in the industry (an agreement that would have brought us in line with West German engineering working hours).

A year and one month after the claim was submitted, strikes began at Aerospace plants. Since that time, other major British Aerospace companies have settled amicably with the CSEU (Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions). We have at local and national level within British Aerospace tried to obtain a negotiated end to this dispute, and are still working to that end.

The engineering industry has seen spectacular productivity increases over the last decade and it is glaringly obvious that if the engineering employers had been as willing to invest in training and new technology as their employees were to accept changed working practices, there would be no productivity gap with our competitors.

The plain truth is that if British workers continue to accept low pay and long hours, they only collaborate with inefficiency.

You advise that I should not plan any fraternal visits abroad. In fact, I have only just returned from a visit to the Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm factory in Hamburg where I received knowledgeable and total support from the German Metalworkers' Union. In particular, support from its members there who are, of course, reliant on Airbus Industrie for their living.

The engineering unions are determined that all their members in every engineering company in the UK will benefit from a shorter working week. We would prefer to get it through negotiation, the productive and profitable way, as we have shown with NEI Parsons, GKN Axles, and others. The EEF chose at national level to obstruct this long overdue reform of working hours in our industry. We are all paying for their misjudgement.

Yours faithfully,
BILL JORDAN, President,
Amalgamated Engineering Union,
110 Peckham Road, SE15.
January 16.

Digging up London

From Dr Ralph Merrifield
Sir, The prospect of competitive tendering for archaeological excavation in London, discussed in your report of January 13, has disturbing implications. To substitute such a system for the service now administered by the Museum of London should surely be preceded by a consultative paper stating in detail the long-term aim and the steps by which it is to be achieved.

The present service, the continued funding of which was guaranteed by the Government when the GLC was abolished, has in-built advantages which cannot be relinquished lightly. It ensures the availability of archaeologists dedicated to building up knowledge of London's past, which they are assembling piecemeal from many sites.

In doing so they have acquired over the years an unrivalled experience of London's special problems, and know precisely the questions to be asked in exploring a new site. As London residents they should be more cost-effective than visiting archaeologists using expensive temporary accommodation.

Lack of commitment to London's history by transient archaeologists, who are likely to be less troublesome to developers in their initial demands and in pursuing a subsequent investigation, will result in minimal excavation and opportunities lost for ever.

Yours faithfully,
RALPH MERRIFIELD
(Chairman, Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Excavation Committee),
6-8 Cole Street, SE1.
January 17.

Cause of inflation

From Sir Ian Morrow
Sir, The answer to Mr A. M. Pay (January 17) is that interest rates and profits are largely determined by the market. Wages are determined by employers' ability to resist inflationary claims from the unions. History records that employers are not very good at resisting claims which are backed up by disruptive tactics and threats of strikes.

Yours truly,
IAN MORROW,
3 Albert Terrace Mews, NW1.
January 17.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Truth and justice on war crimes

From the European Director of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre
Sir, Your correspondent, I. N. Duncan, writes, QC (January 17) missed several points.

1. He calls the perpetrators of war crimes "Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians", but refers to their victims as "Soviet citizens, in the main of Jewish origin". This denaturalizes the victims, who were also citizens of these independent republics and had for generations lived among those who became their murderers — a slur by your correspondent that smacks of the prejudice of the place and the period.

2. To speak of "the attempted genocide" of these Baltic peoples and "in the Ukraine" while referring to the mass murder of Jewish men, women, and children as "allegedly mistreating Soviet citizens", is not only depreciation of the horror, but, considering that these regions are today virtually Judenrein (purged of Jews) quite outrageous. This can only serve the anti-Semitism of so-called "revisionists" who, raising all historical evidence, deny the Holocaust even happened.

3. Trials of war criminals who have abused British hospitality for too long, will not condone the atrocities of the Soviet Union, nor address charges collectively at entire national communities. Should perpetrators of murders committed in the name of Moscow be residing in the United Kingdom, their place should likewise be in the dock.

4. The warning of a pogrom in the Ukraine as a result of British justice taking its course is a strange twist. Surely trials in the United Kingdom might, on the contrary, deter future perpetrators. Double standards only endanger the Jewish surviving remnants of the Holocaust and other minorities in the Soviet Union, by inciting one against the other.

5. If Mr Wallace really wishes to unite "politics" and "principle", he might encourage Balts, Ukrainians, Jews, and others to work together and face the challenges of a post-Stalinist Soviet Union. At a reception I attended last month at the Lithuanian Embassy in Moscow in honour of the first Jewish Congress of the Soviet Union, our hosts expressed revulsion and remorse for the massacre of Jews in their country. They demanded a complete exposure of the truth, whether of the Holo-

caust or the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact as affecting Lithuania.

War crimes trials similarly aim not only at justice for the victims, but justice to the truth. Mr Wallace's positions do a disservice to the cause of historical integrity. Yours faithfully,
SHIMON SAMUELS,
European Director,
Simon Wiesenthal Centre,
134 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré,
5008 Paris, France.
January 17.

From Mr Ivor Stanbrook, MP for Orpington (Conservative)
Sir, If the issue in the war crimes trials controversy were as simple as your correspondents claim (namely, whether we should retrospectively extend the extra-territorial jurisdiction of British courts to British citizens who were not British at the time of the alleged crime), one might indeed wonder what all the fuss is about.

In fact, Messrs Janner and Marshall (January 8) and Brichio (January 9) conveniently ignore the fact that the Hetherington report bases its judgment of the sufficiency of evidence on the assumption that certain significant changes will be made to the normal rules of evidence and procedure solely for the purpose of these proposed trials.

These changes include the cancellation of committal proceedings; the admittance of foreign video recordings; the use of live television links; the admittance as evidence of written statements in a foreign language by aged witnesses unwilling to attend court; the admittance of written statements taken, in circumstances which may never be known, by persons now dead; the admittance of documents without requiring the maker or authenticator to attend court.

All this against the background of events a half-century ago and a thousand miles away, with no realistic chance of the defence seeking or finding evidence and witnesses in support of their case. Such changes are not "in accord with current practice", as Mr Janner claims. On the contrary, they are prerequisites for a rigged trial. No wonder the whole idea is repugnant to Barbara Amiel ("War crimes: a flimsy case", January 3) as it is to most British lawyers.

Yours faithfully,
IVOR STANBROOK,
House of Commons.

Disaster relief

From Mr Peter J. Burton
Sir, Hugh Hanning (January 17) is talking nonsense when he derides Britain's record in responding to disaster relief. Frequently the Overseas Development Administration's Disaster Unit is among the first to provide relief aid to a disaster overseas. The Armenian earthquake in December, 1988, which he mentions, was a case in point. We were in action again in Romania immediately help was needed.

But this is not the point. This is not a race with other countries, nor an exercise to catch headlines. It is an operation to save lives. Victims of disasters have a right to get the help they really need. We make sure we get that help to the right place at the right time. If you send the wrong items you simply clog up the supply lines and prevent other supplies getting through — supplies which might save lives.

Rushdie and the law

From Mr Yunus Ismail
Sir, Robert Kilroy-Silk's article of January 12 ("Salman Rushdie and the short arm of the law") fails to show any understanding of the relationship between Muslims and Islamic law. The latter is a group of religious laws not restricted by citizenship or domicile or residence in a country, but applied by virtue of professing the religion. It is based on a man's duties or obligations rather than on his rights and the sanction is that he will fall into sin.

Islamic law has wider application than any secular system of law, since it claims to regulate all aspects of a man's life, his duties to God, to his neighbour, and to himself.

Whilst I cannot condone calls for the murder of Mr Rushdie, I

David Wyatt makes just these points in his letter (January 15), which Mr Hanning presumably had not seen when he wrote. I hope he has now read it.

The Disaster Unit was set up 15 years ago specifically to respond to natural and man-made disasters overseas. In that time we have sprung into action 650 times and supplied material worth £123 million — in addition to food supplies worth many millions.

Our work is readily acknowledged by the countries we are able to help. In Armenia our work was recognised by the bestowing of an honour by the USSR Government. It is a pity that Mr Hanning, who knows us well, is not prepared to acknowledge this too.

Yours faithfully,
PETER J. BURTON
(Head of Disaster Unit),
Overseas Development Administration,
Eland House, Stag Place, SW1.
January 18.

can appreciate the impact his book has had on the Muslim community, whose lives revolve around the Koran and its teachings. Perhaps the question Kilroy-Silk ought to be asking is: "Why is the DPP taking so long to prosecute Rushdie?" After all, a 18 of the Public Order Act 1986 reads: A person who uses... abusive or insulting words... or displays any written material which is... abusive or insulting is guilty of an offence if... having regard to all the circumstances racial hatred is likely to be stirred up thereby.

This is an objective test. Given Rushdie's origins, his understanding of the Muslim psyche, and the inherent racial difficulties in the UK, I submit that the DPP has an excellent case.

Yours faithfully,
YUNUS ISMAIL,
32 Crawford Place, W1.
January 16.

the wings of the pure science lobby.

To this end, Mr Davis's proposals are insufficiently radical. Perhaps we need an Office of Technology Assessment, on the American model, to guide Government investment in research. Even better, outside a few centres of excellence devoted to world-class pure research, the Government should bring real market pressures to bear by making all Government funding of scientific research contingent upon matching funds from private enterprise.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BERCOW,
2 Pinkerton Place,
Tooting Bec Gardens, SW16.

Unwilling to wait that long, I put a first-class stamp on my application and posted it from a pillar box over the road. The consulate has no letter box.

The application reached the consulate on January 16, having taken 10 days to arrive a distance approximately 50 yards away. My flight to Moscow left without me.

Yours faithfully,
PHIL GODDARD,
70 Cricklewood Broadway, NW2.
January 16.

'999' courses in short supply

From Mr Peter Radoux
Sir, I was pleased to read in *The Times* (report, January 10) that the Government wish to increase the number of ambulance staff with paramedical skills. In my own case, I have been trying since 1983 to secure a place on just such a course, first by attending night school in my own time and at my own expense for two years, whilst a member of the Association of Emergency Medical Technicians; secondly, by sacrificing many rest days to attend lectures given at local hospitals and by the ambulance service.

Entrance exams to the NHS training authority's paramedic course were held almost two years ago. Since then only six ambulance personnel from West Sussex have been given places on that course. I have yet to receive my own course dates, despite the fact that I passed the exam in May, 1988.

I would also say that whilst not paramedics, the vast majority of West Sussex qualified ambulance personnel are trained in many life-saving skills, including the use of cardiac monitor/defibrillators and nebulisers for the treatment of asthmatics.

West Sussex ambulance service employs a two-tier staffing system, whereby second-tier staff are responsible for the transport of all out-patients (a valuable training period while waiting to go on to the first tier), and first-tier staff are used to attend all accident and emergency calls (accounting for 95 per cent of their duties). Training for qualified staff lasts for 64 weeks so, whilst they are not paramedics, they are clearly more than "professional drivers".

Yours faithfully,
PETER RADOUX,
14 Woodcourt, Broadfield,
Crawley, West Sussex.
January 17.

Hong Kong entry

From Dr A. H. Seville
Sir, Suppose that from Hong Kong we allowed in for settlement with their families only those who had already successfully completed a course of higher education here. It would be a simple criterion, automatically selecting those who had established a close connection with this country and who had contributed financially and intellectually to our education system. It would be less inequitable than a plain financial test, there would be few problems of adjustment — and we need the graduates.

I know that the ability, diligence, and courtesy of this group of former students would be an additional recommendation. Indeed, I can think of no respectable reason why their possible entry should be opposed. The numbers involved are comparable with those presently being considered by the Government.

Yours sincerely,
ADRIAN SEVILLE
(Academic Registrar),
City University,
Northampton Square, EC1.

Museum charges

From the Director General of the Imperial War Museum
Sir, Miss Geddes (January 17) is quite right to draw attention to the cost of collecting and conserving exhibits and consequently museums today have systems of establishing exactly what these costs are. We also operate quite sophisticated performance measures for curatorial tasks. Indeed, it is because the national museums are sensibly and efficiently managed that we know precisely what our financial problems are.

For the same reason many of us now believe that museum charges make a measurable and positive contribution to the museum economy. At the Imperial War Museum we have also shown that a combination of lively displays and energetic marketing results in increasing numbers of visitors, even when a charge is imposed.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN BORG,
Director General,
Imperial War Museum,
Lambeth Road, SE1.

Where credit's due

From Mr A. M. Stubbs
Sir, I can effortlessly surpass your correspondent (January 10) who noted banal credits on films. During Christmas we were treated to a letter explaining the working terms and conditions of a local company which was signed: "Executive Assistant to the Deputy Plumber".

Yours faithfully,
A. M. STUBBS,
Down Court Cottage,
Matching Road, Hatfield Heath,
Bishop's Stortford,
Hertfordshire,
January 12.

From Mr Brian Garcia
Sir, How cheerful to seek to deny screen credits to all those hard-working individuals associated with a film production. Let us apply such generosity to other areas. This letter was dictated by... Brian Garcia typed by... Katie O'Malley photocopied by Marjorie Prendegast faxed by... Caron Deans

Yours sincerely,
BRIAN GARCIA,
29 Cluckin Road,
Twickenham, Middlesex.
January 16.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (01)782 5046.



SOME REVIEWS MAY BE REPRINTED FROM YESTERDAY'S LATER EDITIONS

THE ARTS

Cramming it all in

TELEVISION

Sheridan Morley

In the week of the UN Security Council meetings on Cambodia, ITV's *This Week* went back last night to the killing fields with two good stories, neither of which it quite had the time to tell. A decade ago, it was a *This Week* team with the reporter Julian Marryon which first revealed the full horror of the Khmer Rouge massacres, and it was that team which helped Var Hong to escape to England and start a new life with her second husband, the aid worker Robert Ashe, whom she first met in a Cambodian refugee centre.

Ten years on, Marryon's team took her back to Cambodia to search successfully for her blind mother and to verify the details of her first husband's murder by the Khmer Rouge. That alone would have made a compelling 30-minute documentary, but the programme also wanted to deal with the new threat of a regrouped Khmer Rouge, who are once again on the brink of power.

For this reason, it failed to explain some crucial details of precisely how Var found her mother. Nor did it make clear what in the Cambodian national character allows its people to give the certifiably insane Pol Pot not one, but two, chances to murder the entire population.

If ever there was a case for a two-part, or maybe even a spin-off series, it was surely here.

Earlier in the day, *Press Gang* came back to mid-afternoon Central network ITV for a second series: having altogether missed the first, and expecting a conventional teenage serial about a school newspaper, I was unprepared for the remarkably high level of writing and playing, one which would not have disgraced *Low Grant*.

Meanwhile, over on 40 Minutes (BBC 2) Frank Cvetanovich had another fly-on-the-wall documentary, this one about Mr and Mrs Roy Suckling, who run their own airline out of Cambridge, having been banned from Ipswich Airport for making a nasty mess of the grass runway. They do all their own in-flight cooking and vacuum-clean the plane twice daily. It was all very reassuring and English. If you have to make business trips to Amsterdam, better, perhaps, to be looked after by a pilot and stewardess who also own the plane.

John Russell Taylor on the miserable life and surprisingly affirmative work of Arshile Gorky, Armenia's most well known artist

Hot-line to the subconscious

There is a certain fortuitous topicality about the major exhibition devoted to Arshile Gorky at the Whitechapel Art Gallery until March 25: Armenia is unfortunately very much in the news these days, and Gorky is undeniably the most famous of all Armenian artists.

Being Armenian is not, of course, the thing he is most famous for: he is (correctly) remembered as one of the leading figures of New York Abstract Expressionism, and he did leave Armenia (the part which is now in Turkey) at the age of 16, shedding along the way his unmistakably Armenian name, Vosdanik Adoian, in favour of a noncommittal pseudonym which led many to suppose, if they considered the matter at all, that he was simply Russian.

Many accepted terms of art history are strangely inapposite if one considers their root meaning. But the term "Abstract Expressionism" is peculiarly appropriate to Gorky, indicating both the non-figurative surface of most of his work and the turbulent emotions which underlie it.

Gorky's life was in fact fairly miserable, from its early days in Armenia under almost continuous persecution (his mother died of starvation in his arms in 1919) right through to his gloomy end when finally, desperately ill from cancer, coping with a failed marriage and having his painting arm incapacitated through a car accident, he took his own life in 1948, at the age of 44.

Given all this, it seems curious that the emotions informing Gorky's work, though certainly turbulent, are seldom if ever negative and depressing. In fact, often in his later work the British viewer may be reminded of a very different artist, Ceri Richards, especially the symbolic, semi-abstract compositions. This is largely because of the shapes which inhabit Gorky's paintings, rounded and voluptuous, suggesting hearts and birds and

flames and waves, and the force that through the green fuse drives the flower.

In the present show, which runs from some of the earliest known works, like the "Landscape" of 1927-28, to some of the very last, we can begin to see where these characteristic shapes came from. Gorky's career would seem as perfectly consistent in its progression from representation to abstraction as that of Kandinsky, gradually generalizing and eliminating detail until all figurative reference vanishes altogether. It would, if it were not for a curious interlude in the mid-Thirties when Gorky seems for the moment to have fallen under the spell of Picasso and to be replacing the graceful, rounded forms and soft, delicate colours of his early portraits, landscapes and still-lives with spiky formalizations, combining a variety of viewpoints, and abrupt colour contrasts.

However, this phase is temporary and never total: alongside the Picasso-like works he continues to paint in his early style right up until, around 1942, he arrives at the mature synthesis. Most of the later, abstract works have elaborate and fanciful titles, such as "Fragging Good Hope Road", "Landscape Table", "The Betrothal" and "The Plough and the Song".

Using such clues as they afford, one may guess that this shape is a human figure, that is an horizon, the other is a tree or a vase of flowers. But they remain only guesses, useful if they point the way to the buried emotion, distracting if they turn each picture into a puzzle.

To appreciate Gorky one has to keep one's imagination on a loose rein, staying open to the slightest flicker/flutter of suggestion and never trying to tie things down too firmly to literal interpretation. Armenian commentators have clarified a lot by referring us to the Armenian illuminations he knew as a child, the resources of Armenian folklore and so on.

But finally the work has to make it on its own.

This is where Gorky asserts himself as a master of 20th-century painting: he does not so much refer to myths as make myths, and few artists have ever seemed to have a more effective hot-line to some kind of Jungian collective unconscious, where these shapes speak directly to us, and move us, even if we would be hard put to it to say why and how.

Gorky's is obviously a very effective way of abstracting from the reality of a figure or a landscape. Fortunately it is not the only way, as a number of artists currently working in Britain, and currently on show in London, will rapidly convince us. Take John Virtue, for instance, who is showing ten new works at the Lisson Gallery until February 10. His work sometimes seems like a crazy fusion of Rowland Hilder and Andy Warhol. What he does to begin with is paint, in black and white, dozens of small panels of uniform size depicting in a traditional English-pantheist style various corners of the Lancashire village where he lives.

He would hardly be showing in such a bastion of the avant-garde as the Lisson Gallery if that were all he did. He then combines them into very large compartmental compositions, so that similar views become almost like a Warhol serial work — or an old-fashioned Polyphoto contact sheet, if you prefer. The large compositions in this show are further unified by having black or white paint dribbled over them, and other elements added which cross the boundaries from one unit to another. The results are extraordinary: one is constantly aware of the tug between the urge to move in closer and decipher the individual sections and the urge to stand back and take in the whole as one richly textured abstract.



"Woman's head (portrait of Akaki)", circa 1936, one of Gorky's few figurative works

Jeremy Kingston

The Caucasian Chalk Circle Sadler's Wells

narrower family bounds: the tabloids would headline it as "Missing Heir in Tug-of-Love Heart-break".

In a production first seen last year's Edinburgh Festival, the young company are signally better at singing, their speciality, than acting. The musicians also give good value, although nothing in Stephen Warbeck's score equals the fascinating opening moments when Zi Lan Liao, a student from Liverpool, gives a swirling solo on her *cheng*. This exotic instrument can be described as a harp stretched into an oblong and laid flat on a board curved like an upturned miniature punt. She sweeps her fingers over the strings as though rippling the surface of a cattle trough, and high clear notes come twinkling from it.

The songs in the show are plainer stuff, chants set to march rhythms with a little syncopation

as ornament, and the lost opportunity for another *cheng* display is a pity. But the singing is strong and articulate, whether delivered by the chorus standing in a bold proletarian line facing the audience or by a single singer, notably Byron Calmonson's Azdak, giving ironic point to his songs of abasement.

Unfortunately, the complexity of Azdak's character is seriously diminished by cutting, and elsewhere the scenes that hold most interest in this uneven production are those that demonstrate the simplest emotions: Matt Banks personifying the honest soldier, Jude Law a bespeckled male, bobbing his head as he attempts to ingratiate himself with all parties. Naoko Mori offers the proper look of dogged goodness as Grusha but until her passionate downstage outbursts at the trial is often hard to understand.

Far too many of the performers seem daunted by the size of the theatre and have not been shown how to raise the voice without squawking, and this suggests that a more appropriate choice of show for the company would contain more songs and nothing like this amount of shouting.

Astonishing smile of bravery

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

Hedda Gabler King's Head

even duller marriage, must be one of the hardest of all characters to embody. She is variously fine, cruel, idealistic, petty-minded, fastidious, proud, witty, weak, strong, conventional, unconventional, and much more besides. Jackson was too grim, Smith too wry and, as I recall, Szeman too cool.

Quinn looks radiant, even dazzling, as she stalks the stage smiling her big white smile. No wonder Timothy Bentinck's Tesman is so abjectly besotted with her. But there is no denying she is still vocally uncertain and lacking in variety. Moreover, she expects that smile to express more than one smile could ever reasonably do: exasperation, defiance, amuse-

ment, malice and even despair. In so far as there is an overall interpretation, it is that, as Hedda says, she is horribly bored. Hence Quinn's rangy paces, her irritated way with the sofa cushion, and the frustration she gently projects when confronted with her dreary husband and his poshly sunt. But of Hedda's desperation for power, of her fascination with destruction, and of other such dark matters, Quinn has nothing to tell.

The rest of Rona Dowds' production, crammed on to a stage rather too short and shallow for a full set of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, is uneven. Richard O'Callaghan, more Babychem drinker than roaring boy, seems miscast as that small-town Dionysus, Lovborg; but Bentinck is as comically true a Tesman as I have seen — a rumpled, genial innocent confronted with emotional cliffs and chasms without map, rope or compass, and wonderfully unaware, not just of his deficiencies, but of the very existence of such geography.

Such a magnificent conclusion

CONCERTS

Paul Griffiths

BBC SO/Berio Barbican Hall

Berliozmania is over, but surely not for long. Wednesday night's closing concert left us looking keenly forward to his next visit to London, if only so that Richard Loe can learn how to pronounce his name.

We began with *Passaggio* (1961-2), Berio's first encounter with his principal writer-collaborator (scarcely librettist) Edoardo Sanguineti, and also his first operatic venture. The work is a short monodrama for soprano, like Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, except that here the soloist is the victim not of her own delirium but of the

roles projected onto her by literary and theatrical tradition, by history, and most dramatically by the audience, among whom are planted several groups of transient actors and singers.

In the early Sixties, this perhaps seemed a neat way of provoking the public: showing up the folly of their antagonism by voicing it for them. But because the interventions are meticulously crafted (requiring two conductors for each group, besides Berio on

the rostrum), they become part of the work.

Thus, *Passaggio* can be seen as an early essay in the musical inclusion of speech that Berio went on to accomplish in most of his later vocal works, including not least *Cora*, the slowly turning world of ravishing vocal-instrumental textures that closed this concert.

Passaggio also contains the seeds of so much else. There is the black sound of a predominantly wind and percussion orchestra, looking forward to *Labirinti II* and even to parts of *Offanin*, which must count as the major discovery of this festival.

And besides this there is the theatrical irony, so that the entire play is a play within a play, as in the full-scale opera, *Un re in ascolto*, for which the composer was receiving his award.

This partly staged performance was dominated by Luisa Castellani as the nameless heroine, at first a bit frail but then using her fragility and naturalness to help make the point. The BBC Singers and Symphony Orchestra provided the sonic decor, bleak but beautiful in a way only Berio could manage, and students from the Guildhall School were excellent as the whisperers and louder opponents.

There can have been few other disasters in the hall.

Passionate and pure

Stephen Pettitt

Tallis Scholars/Phillips St John's, Smith Square

The eight cool, pure voices which on Tuesday made up the Tallis Scholars were doing more than merely giving a concert. They were also consolidating an important evolution in taste which happened in the Eighties. It is due largely to their work, inspired by the passionate commitment of their director, Peter Phillips, over the past decade, that so many are able to find emotional and spiritual reward in Renaissance music today.

This programme of late 15th-century north European polyphony moreover illustrated an often ignored fact, that composers of the age showed personal characteristics in their music in much the same way as, say, Haydn and Mozart. It began with Johannes Regis's *Salve sponsa*, an apparently typically ornate work full of complex rhythms and markedly variegated strands which spoke strongly of a medieval influence, of sheer imposing magnificence. Yet it still had an element of something deeply personal in it, as did Antoine Brumel's similarly rhythmically jagged but tauter *Magnificat*, a piece graced with

constantly changing voice-combinations which nevertheless works towards a feeling of climax. Both works the Tallis Scholars attacked with the right blend of vigour and sensitivity, achieving an exquisite balance.

With Jacob Obrecht's *Ave regina caelorum*, scored for lower voices only, we entered a different world. Here the emphasis is not so much on rhythm as on sonority and gracefully shaped melody. It was given with what one can only describe as a gentle voluptuousness. Jean Mouton's *Ave fuit prima salus*, on the other hand, is a piece of greater urgency, with a more tenable sense of onward development within the framework of a similar basic set of ground rules.

The same composer's *Nesciens mater* takes contrapuntal severity, you might think, to its limits; it is a rigidly structured, complex canon in eight parts. In fact it is also a highly emotional yet placid masterpiece, shaped and paced quite beautifully by these singers.

It is more difficult to mould into a satisfactory whole the complex sequence of movements, short and long, ethereal and dark, which make up Pierre de la Rue's *Missa pro defunctis*. This, too, the Tallis Scholars managed, not least by creating an atmosphere of rapt spirituality.

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THE ARTS/ROCK

Steve Turner examines the influence of Anthony Burgess's novel, *A Clockwork Orange*, on pop musicians

A hanging note of discord

Anthony Burgess is feeling a malenky-bit poorly about hearing the music for the stage version of his 1962 novel *A Clockwork Orange*. "I'm a bit scared of it because my original intention was to use the music of Beethoven," he says. "It was appropriate because that was the music the hero Alex likes. He rather despises the other stuff."

Alex is the teenage thug of Burgess's future world who is thrilled by acts of violence and who is in turn "cured" of his evil bias through aversion therapy. The "other stuff" he despises is rock music. In the case of the new RSC production, directed by Ron Daniels, the music has been composed by Bono and The Edge, of the group U2.

Burgess doesn't find "a great deal" in rock music. He says it is not "big enough for him, an opinion he attributes to his musicianship rather than to his 72 years. But, unfortunately for him, because of *A Clockwork Orange* he has for 25 years attracted the attention of rock musicians.

There have been groups which have wanted to stage rock operas based on the book, groups which have named themselves after the book or characters in it (the Droogs, Heaven 17) and groups, like the Addicts from Ipswich, whose image of white boiler suits tucked into large boots and black bowler hats, was based on the filmic Alex.

In creating Alex, the anti-social teenager whose Anglo-Russian slang *nadsat* distances him from the adult world and whose only moments of joy come through loud music, impersonal sex, drugs and violence, Burgess thought he was portraying a nightmare of evil. But in the changing moral climate of the Sixties, Alex and his droogs began to look more like heroes to a generation who were becoming less respectful of authority and more fascinated by the "cheap



The Rolling Stones: hip Sixties malchicks looking for a bad image

thrills" which authorities sought to curb. To Andrew Loog Oldham — in 1964 the youthful manager of the Rolling Stones — *A Clockwork Orange* embodied the aggressive and anti-social attitude he wanted to foster as an image for his group. "The Rolling Stones," he had boasted on the cover of their debut album, "are more than just a group — they are a way of life."

Along with Mick Jagger, Keith Richards and a driver called Reg the Butcher, who had been hired to exert muscle, he started living out the droogish fantasy. "We went through the whole *Clockwork Orange* thing together," Richards later said.

Oldham even planned to purchase the film rights and use *A Clockwork Orange* as the Rolling Stones' bad boy response to the Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night*. "The

time wasn't right though," says Burgess. "We were not ready for nudity and rape on the screen." For the group's second album, Oldham composed a lengthy sleeve note written in imitation *nadsat*, referring to himself and the Stones as "six hip malchicks" and urging the penurious record shop browser to find a blind man, "knock him on the head, steal his wallet and low and behold you have the loot if you put in the boot, good, another one sold!"

This passage was later removed by the record company after protests from organizations for the blind and a complaint from a member of the House of Lords to the Director of Public Prosecutions, calling it "a deliberate incitement to criminal activity."

The film of *A Clockwork Orange*, eventually made by Stanley Kubrick in 1971, contained no



U2's Bono and The Edge: a different perspective, against aimlessness

rock stars and no rock music. The soundtrack was mostly Beethoven, Purcell and Rossini, some of it adapted for synthesizer. But, with its images of high-rise urban desolation and its evocation of a futuristic youth culture, it had a unique appeal to rock fans.

David Bowie, then writing *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*, was among the first to be affected, dressing in a modified droog costume and coming on stage to the synthesized sounds of Beethoven's Ninth, Alex's favourite piece of music.

In the mid-Eighties the film — only available in Britain on pirate

videos — inspired a youth cult centred on UK Today, a fashion stall in Kensington Market where the bowler hats, brooches, steel braces and designer coat pieces on sale were all based on the *Clockwork Orange* uniform.

The cult was organized, says one of the leaders, as a reaction to deteriorating values. The aim was to promote "self-respect and self-pride rather than self-destruction" and the adoption of the droog costume was meant to be subversive. "We wanted to show that you could be firm and strong without being violent and perverse."

Among the stall's customers, the controversial EMI band Sigue



Sigue Sigue Sputnik: aggressively promoting violence and mayhem

Sigue Sputnik actively promoted the image of menace and mayhem. They used the *Clockwork Orange* soundtrack to whip their audience into what they called "a violent state", used the film as a reference point in both their songs and promotion, and opened their debut single with a shout of "ultra-violence! ultra-violence!"

But it was the punks of the mid-Seventies who came closest to living out the nightmare of *A Clockwork Orange*. Johnny Rotten and Sid Vicious of the Sex Pistols, with their love of spitting at "pathetic" people, their dismissal of aimlessness, appeared to have been modelled on Alex and his sicklekick Dim.

It disturbed Burgess that *A Clockwork Orange* has largely been misunderstood; that it has been taken up as a model for stylish loutishness rather than as a warning about the nature of good and evil and the responsibility on us to choose which we follow.

"Without being pretentious, it is what I would call a theological book, in that it posits that you have to have evil if you are going to have good. If you only have one, there is no choice," he said.

Bono and The Edge are the least droogish musicians so far to become identified with *A Clockwork Orange*. Passionately against

violence and drug abuse, concerned by spiritual poverty, unemployment and aimlessness; they would no doubt spend hours talking with Alex but would never don bowlers and boots.

Yet, oddly enough, because of their Christian compassion, their view of *A Clockwork Orange* as a morality tale about the effect of starving the young of creative options, coincides with the author's intended message. Their reference point for the droogs has been the crack-dealing gangs and urban hip-hop culture of Los Angeles. Burgess was the Teddy Boys and rockers of the late Fifties, whom he saw in Soho coffee bars. "I saw fairly clearly at that time," he says, "that the future was going to be plagued by a great deal of youthful energy that was not being trained in the direction of knowledge or creation and hence had to give itself over to destruction."

The RSC production he sees as a way of putting a cap on rock's pursuit of his project. "I don't like the book all that much," he says. "Unfortunately it has pursued me for the past 30 years and goes on pursuing me. I hope that with this production I might be free of it."

A Clockwork Orange previews are from next Friday and it opens on February 6 at the Barbican Theatre

Adrian Dannatt reports on the French Government's efforts to promote local rock

One of President Mitterrand's most mocked cultural initiatives — the appointment last May of 27-year-old Bruno Lion as Junior Minister for the Rock and Popular Music — has finally borne fruit. The French are now watching, either with amusement or bemusement, the first tangible signs of their government's new commitment to "Le Rock": a state-funded scheme which means, among other things, that Les Thugs have at last been given the opportunity to do their best, or their worst.

Les Thugs are one of 15 rock groups which have battled to the final of the "Fonds d'Action et d'Initiative Rock". The 15 have been chosen by a panel of experts to represent the best of the new Gallic rock 'n' roll. As the selected stars for 1990, they are being given concerts throughout the year, plus management consultancy, media guidance, cash assistance of between 20,000 and 40,000 francs (£2,000-£4,000) and free publicity.

Jack Lang, the publicity-conscious French Minister of Culture, has always been concerned about pop culture. Traditionally-minded

Power to the people

(that is, traditionally xenophobic) Frenchmen have long felt that the tide of American populism is destroying Gallic tradition and language for the sake of Mid-Atlantic Attitude. The only problem is that France has a pitifully weak rock tradition. First of all Lang tried to impose a harsh quota on the amount of foreign music allowed on the radio — a hopeless idea, even though a similar decree does effectively limit the amount of American TV shown in France.

Unable to keep the English-speaking rock groups out, Lang set up a rock section for his Ministry of Culture, appointing Lion as "Minister Rock" to boost the French industry and give official recognition to rock as a worldwide entertainment business rather than some anti-social activity. The idea of a Minister for Rock may seem laughable, but no more so than the presence that the marketing career of Bo Diddley, or the multi-million industry based



Le ministre de Rock: Bruno Lion

around Dire Straits, is some sort of teenage snarl. The laudable aims of the enterprise, to raise local and international awareness of French popular music, and possibly also to generate a few genuine contenders for the international rock arena, are somewhat deflated, however,

by a glance at its first initiative. Out of a short list of 700, whittled down to 300, the chosen 15 bands read like a pastiche of every joke ever made about French rock: an 'Allo 'Allo of surreal culture. Beside Les Thugs, one has to contend with the chilling embarrassment of groups called Susan and the Visitors, Les Roadrunners and — though it taxes credulity — something called Dominic Sonic, a name surely brewed up by the team responsible for Spinal Tap.

There is also the incidental pleasure of discovering that Johan Asherton, founder of Les Frotteurs (doubtless you recall 1985's classic, "Get Frotter"), has been tipped for the top.

Other Ministry schemes, such as the creation of new concert halls, alternative magazines and TV programmes may well do their bit to lift the spirit of the French pop industry. Yet it is hard to believe that anything can overcome the power of the English-speaking market. Or at least not until there is a Minister for the suppression of things called Dominic Sonic.

BOOK REVIEW

David Toop

There was a time, not so long ago, when it was possible to pretend that popular music did not exist. Now its sounds, images and gossip are so ubiquitous that they form a subliminal chatter which speaks to us whether we like it or not.

The discourse of pop and rock has grown accordingly. Academic books have made a small but significant contribution to this Babel of noise since the early Seventies and the most consistent voice from the academic sector has belonged to Simon Frith. As editor of a new collection of essays which fill, broadly speaking, into the category of rock sociology, Frith admits that, "rock critics despise rock academics, rock musicians despise rock critics, rock fans despise each other."

What is clear from *Facing the Music* is that a meaningful interpretation of rock music emerges only through a complementary reading of all these warring factions. Rock fans lack objectivity, rock musicians lack humility and

Praise be to hype

importance in the larger picture of entertainment media, has irrevocably changed.

His contrasting models of an outmoded career pyramid — from pub gigs to superstar — as against the new talent pool of a mainstream core picking off potential international packaging fodder from a floating outer ring of new ideas, is not completely convincing; however, it does account for the sensation that the excitement of popular music are increasingly rare and marginal, as the mainstream becomes an expression of corporate marketing.

If there is a weakness in these essays, it is the avoidance of music as sound. Music criticism is intensely problematic by comparison with social histories, demographic analysis and the critique of hair cuts and trouser widths, but the pessimism that settles on the reader by the conclusion of the book is incomplete without it.

Facing the Music, edited by Simon Frith, published by Mandarin, £4.50.

ALBUMS

David Sinclair

Jungle Brothers: Done by the Forces of Nature (Warner Bros 25072-1)

After the recent wave of over-hyped, murderously up-tight West Coast gangster rap, what a pleasure it is to lock in to the kinder perspectives of Harlem's Jungle Brothers. Like De La Soul, with whom they are constantly bracketed and who feature here on the track "Doin' our own Dang", the Jungle Brothers have broadened the emotional scope of rap to include warmth, humanity, humour and variety, but without betraying the propulsive rhythmic minimalism and proud black attitude that lies at the music's (hard) core. Funky but friendly is the watchword here.

The beats are grainy, old-fashioned affairs. On "Acknowledge Your Own History", a persuasive assertion of the need to maintain a black cultural identity within a predominantly white society, no attempt has been made to disguise the crackles and scratches on the record from which the rhythm track has originally been sampled.

The title song is an eco-rap that hymns the wonders of hot, baked carrot cake along with "Rainbows, volcanoes, waterfalls, native calls/ Avalanches, tree with branches/

Friendly beats from the jungle

B-boys in their favourite stances". The jungle motif provides a constant strong thematic link between the African motherland and the modern American urban sprawl. "All decked out in my tiger-skin suit/Hair braided up and my Jungle Brother boots/Hopped on the vine and swung through the city/Today's ya day said the neighbourhood gypsy."

Although the album does not boast the melodic ingenuity which distinguishes De La Soul's work, and is therefore unlikely to furnish the same flush of hit singles, it is informed throughout by a distinctive *jolie de vivre* that quickly works its way under the skin. Best of all is the infectious good humour of "Feelin' Alright", a surreal, feel-good narrative hooked up to an irresistible tug-of-the-elbow beat in a combination so sharp and sprightly that it never fails to lift the spirits.

Warren Zevon: *Transverse City* (Virgin America VUSLP 9) Despite his rather bookish air and smaller-than-life persona, Warren Zevon is blessed with a characterfully deep, husky voice and a knack for writing the kind of muscular, rootsy tunes, which in the hands of a more aggressive performer like John Cougar



Jungle Brothers: rapping with warmth, humanity, humour and variety

Mellencamp, might well have formed the basis for a multi-million dollar career. This ambitious but disappointing collection finds him bogged down with a vaguely futuristic, greenish-hued, concept album that lacks the memorable brooding drama of "Boom Boom Santini" or the wry, personal touches of "Detox Mansion". *Transverse City* is rather like a laid back, West Coast version of Lou Reed's *New York*, where instead of huddling on the brink of extinction on the Dirty Blvd the characters are to be found flailing in traffic jams ("Gridlock") or suffering soul-debilitating shopping experiences ("Down in the Mall").

Not enough of the songs hit the emotional mark. Zevon needs to readjust his sights to something closer to his heart.

Loop: A Gilded Eternity (Situation Two SITU 27)

A couple of weeks ago I received a white label copy of Loop's album which comprises two 12-inch discs designed to be played at 45-rpm. In the absence of any instructions I listened to the whole masterwork at 33-and-a-third, and while my notes were peppered with words like "mordant", "glum" and "grisy sound" it did not occur to me to change the speed.

I am happy to report that it sounds better at 45-rpm, but must

regretfully conclude that Loop's penchant for utterly formless arrangements of endlessly repeated, grungy guitar riffs, battered down by a clanky overloaded bass and coloured by the merest hint of an airy vocal wafting by in the distance is essentially a load of artful hogwash.

Cat Stevens: The Very Best of Cat Stevens (Island 840 148-2)

Despite a sizeable tally of hits, including a US No 1 album (*Catch Bull at Four*) Cat Stevens is one of those lapsed performers whose mail seems to have become covered over very swiftly.

The bedst balladeer turned Muslim fundamentalist, undoubtedly had a commanding timbre to his voice and a knack with a sentimental lyric and a folksy melody. This collection, which focuses primarily on his hit singles, includes "Lady D'Arbanville", "Matthew and Son", "Moonshadow", "Wild World" and his version of "The First Cut is the Deepest", better known by other artists, but arguably the only standard which he wrote.

Presumably the glaring absence of "I'm Gonna Get Me a Gun" (No 6 in 1967) reflects sensitivity to Stevens's somewhat reckless public endorsement of Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie.

WEEKEND GIGS

Compiled by David Toop, Rose Rouse and David Sinclair

JAH WOBBLE: The reggae-influenced bass playing of Jah Wobble was one of the most striking aspects of Public Image Limited, the group formed by John Lydon after the collapse of the Sex Pistols. Since then, Wobble has wobbled from one variant of post-punk, jazz-rock-fusion, world music to another. *Marquee*, 105 Charing Cross Rd, London WC2 (01-437 8603). Tonight, 7pm, £5.

SHE ROCKERS: This female duo helped to break the male hegemony of British rap but they

have tended to suffer a credibility problem thanks to their uneasy balance of commercial pop and hard-core hip-hop. *The Fridge*, Ebury Hill, London SW2 (01-326 5100). Tomorrow, 10pm, £8.

ORZ: A new group led by Larry Stabbins, who will be familiar to those unfamiliar with jazz as one half of the driving force behind Working Week. Stabbins may be one of the best tenor saxophonists in the country, but this has never prevented him from working in some very accessible settings. *Diagonally*, Camden Lock, London, NW1 (01-267 4967). Sunday, 1pm, £3.50.

HAVANA 3AM: Bass player Paul Simonon is the last member of the

Clash to come out of the traps with his own project. His new group has been whipping up a storm on tour with Big Audio Dynamite, and is apparently something of a post-punk/Latin hybrid. *Borderline*, Orange Yard, off Marston St, London WC2 (01-497 2261). Tuesday and Wednesday, 8pm, £5.

ENERGY ORCHARD: Blue-collar Belfast rock band with serious intentions. Primary influence is stated to be Van Morrison, but they sound at times more like a caricature version of U2. Debut single "Belast" released this week. *Belast Polytechnic*, Colindale Lane (0272 662621). Tonight, 8pm, £1.50. Cardiff University, Park Place

(0222 396421). Tomorrow, 8pm, £2 (Students only). University of Surrey, Guildford (0483 571281). Sunday, 8pm, free (Students only). University of Kent, Rutherford College, Canterbury (0227 765224). Monday, 8.30pm, £2.

RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY: Last September's *Blow* found the Lornes adding some surprisingly tuneful colourings to their mournful, clumpy Goth-rock sound, but their live show remains an over-driven rumpus. *Marquee*, 105 Charing Cross Rd, London WC2 (01-437 8603). Tomorrow, 7pm, £5.

UT: Three women who have a black sense of humour, who like to play aggressive noise games.

Coming out of New York's New Wave scene *The Falcon*, London NW1. (01-485-3834). Tomorrow, 8pm, £3.00.

THE MYSTERY GIRLS: This band, who are not girls and have yet to receive any recognition, were playing at being the New York Dolls with backing tapes five years ago. Now they seem to be going for an excitable R & B sound. *The Greyhound*, London W6. (01-385-0258). Tomorrow, 8pm, £5.

CARTER THE UNSTOPPABLE SEX MACHINE: Oddly named, these two boys are quintessentially British indie popsters. Dead pan, cynical and socially concerned. *Princess Charlotte*, Leicester. (0533-563-956). Tomorrow, 8pm, £2.50.

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Executive Editor
David Brewerton

THE POUND

US dollar
1.5460 (-0.0035)
W. German mark
2.8089 (+0.0237)
Exchange index
88.1 (+0.3)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share
1864.4 (-30.9)
FT-SE 100
2338.9 (-37.0)
USM (Datastream)
157.13 (-0.73)

Market report, page 26

Macarthy
sued by
ex-chief

Macarthy, the pharmaceutical wholesaler, was yesterday served a writ by its former chairman, claiming damages, immediately in front of the group's results for the year ended September. Mr Ian Parsons, the chief executive, confirmed that Mr Nicholas Ward, until last August Macarthy's chairman and chief executive - had served papers on the company. Macarthy reported pre-tax profits of £6.5 million (£6.1 million) on a turnover of £133.4 million (£137.9 million). The final dividend rises from 7p to 7.5p, payable on April 9, making 12.5p (11.5p). There is an extraordinary charge of £2.02 million below the profits line, associated with UniChem legal moves, reorganization of manufacturing and other items. Macarthy's shares were 7p weaker at 220p.

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STOCK MARKETS

New York	Dow Jones	2854.22 (-4.91)*
London	Nikkei Average	36728.46 (-91.88)
Hong Kong	Hong Kong	2771.87 (+16.88)
Singapore	CSX Tendency	1132 (-1.2)
Frankfurt	Sydney	1578.7 (-6.1)
Paris	Frankfurt DAX	1770.40 (-23.08)
Madrid	General	6458.85 (-33.5)
Amsterdam	Paris CAC	336.53 (-3.0)
Brussels	Zurich S&P	608.7 (-7.5)
Stockholm	FT-A All-Share	1189.74 (-16.73)
Copenhagen	FT-100	1275.64 (-18.95)
Helsinki	FT-Gold Mines	342.9 (-8.5)
Oslo	FT-World Interest	81.80 (-0.44)
Warsaw	FT-Govt Secs	81.04 (-0.58)

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Shares	Ranger Oil	375p (+11p)
Fall:	Hammerprint	130p (-60p)
	Hammerbank A	800p (-18p)
	Hammerbank B	420p (-12p)
	Hammerbank C	587p (-20p)
	Burnham	657p (-20p)
	Hu-Swift	472p (-20p)
	Hammerbank D	84p (-10p)
	Entertainment Units	622p (-22p)
	GNI	423p (-11p)
	GNI	742p (-23p)
	Legal & General	585p (-30p)
	Paragon	671p (-12p)
	Stella	475p (-10p)
	Smithline Beech	578p (-10p)
	Widened	715p (-15p)
	PSO	824p (-15p)
	PSO	782p (-15p)
	Carlson Comm	780p (-15p)
	Sinclair & Spence	280p (-11p)
	Claydon	248p
	SEAG Volume	482.7m

INTEREST RATES

London Bank Base	15%
3-month Interbank	15%-15.5%
3-month sterling bills	14%-14.5%
3-month US\$ 10%	
3-month Treasury Bills	7.77-7.78%
30-year bonds	9.7%-9.75%

CURRENCIES

London	New York	£1.5460
Paris	DM	1.7070
Frankfurt	DM	1.7070
Amsterdam	DM	1.7070
Brussels	DM	1.7070
Stockholm	SEK	1.4530
Copenhagen	DKK	1.4530
Helsinki	FIN	1.4530
Oslo	NOK	1.4530
Warsaw	PLN	1.4530
Stockholm	SEK	1.4530
Copenhagen	DKK	1.4530
Helsinki	FIN	1.4530
Oslo	NOK	1.4530
Warsaw	PLN	1.4530

GOLD

London Fixing	AM \$412.50-413.50
Close	\$412.75-413.25 (\$250.50-251.00)
New York	Comex \$413.80-414.30

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Mar) - \$19.45 bid (\$19.13)
* Denotes latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank	Bank
London	2.15	1.95	1.95
Amsterdam	2.15	1.95	1.95
Brussels	2.15	1.95	1.95
Copenhagen	2.15	1.95	1.95
Frankfurt	2.15	1.95	1.95
Helsinki	2.15	1.95	1.95
Oslo	2.15	1.95	1.95
Paris	2.15	1.95	1.95
Stockholm	2.15	1.95	1.95
Warsaw	2.15	1.95	1.95
Zurich	2.15	1.95	1.95

Ferranti dives after last suitor pulls out

By Angela Mackay

Ferranti International shares plummeted 10p to end at a record low of 26p after Thomson-CSF, the French defence group, became the last suitor to formally withdraw from the bidding for the defunct British defence and electronics company.

Thomson, the last of about a dozen companies which examined making a bid for Ferranti, said it was continuing talks on a divisional level but was making the announcement to end the offer period started last October when it and British Aerospace said they were considering making an offer.

Even though BAe said it was no longer interested, Thomson was still obliged by the takeover rules to pay at least 57p a share - the price the two companies paid in an afternoon raid to net about 1 per cent of Ferranti.

The French group, however, said it reserved the right to "re-open its consideration of a bid" if circumstances changed.

Traders said turnover of 18 million shares was the highest seen for at least two months. They said the volume of trade indicated speculators fled the stock after the possibility of a bid had disappeared before the 25p-a-share rights issue on February 5 to raise £187 million.

However, Sir Derek Alun-Jones, Ferranti's chairman said: "The removal of an implied bid threat was helpful. We are continuing talks with a number of parties, including Thomson, about collaboration and asset sales."

NAB to pay
£976m for
Yorkshire

By Angela Mackay

National Australia Bank, the third biggest in Australia, threatened a strong foreign challenge in British retail banking yesterday by announcing the purchase of Yorkshire Bank for £976.5 million.

NAB, which also owns Scotland's Clydesdale Bank, Ulster's Northern Bank and the National Irish Bank, becomes the United Kingdom's eighth biggest bank in terms of profits and seventh biggest in terms of outlets.

NAB paid £876.5 million for the ordinary share capital and £100 million for the subordinated loan capital to become the leading foreign player in the UK retail market.

By the time the deal is completed, NAB will pay about £1 billion after paying interest from January 1 on the purchase price.

The vendors, a consortium of National Westminster Bank (40 per cent), Barclays (32 per cent), Lloyds Bank (20 per cent) and The Royal Bank of Scotland (8 per cent), said they were "delighted with the deal."

Lord Alexander of Weedon, NatWest's chairman, said the consortium had opted for a private auction because it gave them more control over the deal and a better price than

they would have received if Yorkshire had been floated.

Mr Nobby Clark, NAB's chief executive, said Yorkshire had been on NAB's "wish list" for about seven years. He said it was "a lean and hungry bank, just like us, and just as stringent on its controls."

The Australians first entered the UK retail market in 1987 when they bought Clydesdale Bank, Northern Bank and National Irish Bank from Midland Bank for £420 million. Since then, they have injected much-needed capital into those operations and increased their profitability to record levels.

NAB paid 13.8 times earnings for Yorkshire or 2½ times book value. This compared with 14.3 times earnings for Clydesdale. Analysts said the price paid was reasonable, albeit closer to the top end of their estimates.

Miss Alison Deuchars, banking analyst with Smith New Court, the broker, said: "The price is very good if you compare it to the 12.6 times earnings Alliance & Leicester paid for Girobank, which is a much weaker institution than Yorkshire."

Mr Clark said the addition of Yorkshire's 250-strong branches meant NAB now had about 700 retail branches, concentrated mostly in Scotland and the north of England.

Comment.....23

creased their profitability to record levels.

While the consortium had received several offers for Yorkshire since it was put up for auction last October, only NAB and a joint offer from Dresdner Bank and BNP were the serious contenders.

Speculation that NAB would not be able to find the cash because of its exposure to Mr Alan Bond's group of companies was dismissed by Mr Clark who said his bank had just filed a document with the SEC in the US saying NAB's net exposure was Aus\$280 million (£133 million), all of which was secured debt.

Anglia Television Group, the TV contractor, is drawing on the skills of one of its long-standing non-executive directors, the film producer Mr David Puttnam, next year as it enters the last phase of its bid to regain its franchise.

The company reported pre-tax profits ahead from £16.0 million to £18.5 million in the 12 months to end-October, on the back of a 14 per cent rise in advertising revenue. A final dividend of 6.4p makes a total increased from 7.75p to 9p.

Mr Puttnam, through his Enigma Productions company, will produce for Anglia a package of one-off films for the ITV network. At least one is a historical drama based on events in this century.

Anglia TV rises to £18.5m

By Martin Waller

Anglia Television Group, the TV contractor, is drawing on the skills of one of its long-standing non-executive directors, the film producer Mr David Puttnam, next year as it enters the last phase of its bid to regain its franchise.

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Since the financial year end it had expanded further into local radio, said Sir Peter Gibbins, chairman. It now has stakes in four stations in its catchment area, but there are no present intentions to buy into a network outside the Anglia area.

Sir Peter said airtime sales had turned down towards the end of last summer as the economy slowed. He commented: "We would anticipate our slice of the cake to grow in the way it has in the past."

Anglia has put in place its own form of "golden handcuffs" aimed at locking in essential management beyond the start of the next franchise round.

But Sir Peter, in a reference to the controversial LWT (Holdings) scheme, promised: "Nobody will walk away with anything near the sort of figures that have been talked about in connection with another TV company."

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Lowndes
rescue
talks
continue

By Gillian Bowditch

Directors of Lowndes Queensway, its bankers and lawyers were last night bantling to save the troubled furniture group.

Many in the City believe the company to be on the brink of insolvency if it does not receive an urgent £70 million injection of new capital.

Meetings have been going on all day and most of the night this week and negotiations were expected to continue until early this morning.

An announcement is expected today which will contain news of the resignation of Mr James Gulliver, Lowndes' chairman and the man behind the £450 million buy-in of Sir Philip Harris's furniture empire 18 months ago. A source close to the company said: "You have no idea the number of parties involved and the jobs at risk. The situation is extremely delicate."

According to last year's report and accounts the average number of employees at the group was 5,834. But many other jobs, including those in furniture manufacturing, depend on Lowndes.

It is believed the Lowndes board and the syndicate of banks involved in the buyout are split as to whether or not the company should accept the rescue package - its second in six months.

Lowndes shares were suspended at 8.5p last month when the £70 million package was approved "in principle" with its bankers. At the time Mr Eddie Dayan, managing director, called it a "once for all solution" but there have been fears that Lowndes may find life difficult even with the rescue package.

If the group does accept the £70 million equity and non-yielding convertible package the directors' options and incentives will almost certainly disappear.

Last week Mr Gulliver resigned as chairman of Broad Street, the public relations group, after France's BDDP acquired 29.9 per cent.

Comment.....23

Battersea
payment
dispute

By Our City Staff

Sir Robert McAlpine, the building contractor, is moving its plant off the troubled Battersea Power Station site in south London after a dispute over non-payment with the developer, Mr John Broome.

The contractor, which went private late last year, refused to comment. But it is thought to be claiming between £15 million and £20 million from Mr Broome's Alton Group for the work done at Battersea.

Source close to Mr Broome indicated that McAlpine could expect payment at the end of next month. The company stopped work on the site, which Mr Broome wants to develop as a huge theme park, in March last year as costs began to soar.

It is now dismantling huts and removing its construction equipment but will retain a token presence. Mr Broome now intends to add a large office and conference element to the site to increase its potential for profit.

SmithKline to sell
famous old brands

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

SmithKline Beecham, the Lucozade to pharmaceuticals group formed last July by transatlantic merger, wants to sell its Bovril and Marmite brands which go back to near the turn of the century.

The Ambrosia range of prepared rice and other desserts is also for sale.

The move comes as it still trying, so far unsuccessfully, to sell off its cosmetics division whose brands include Yardley and Lenthéric.

Analysts suggested that the value of Bovril, Marmite and Ambrosia - even though meat and yeast spreads are no longer a growth market - would be at least £80 million.

Mr David Lang, the leading food analyst at Henderson Crosthwaite, said: "The profit contribution of the three brands could be about £20 million, and with the right new owner, like a dry goods grocer, much of that could go straight to the bottom line

given economies such as in distribution.

"If there is anything like an auction the price might well go above £100 million."

But the big question is how far such products, which have appealed particularly to English tastes, could be exploited in other culinary cultures and especially on the Continent.

When Beecham bought the three brands from Générale Occidentale in 1980 sales stood at £47 million. In the year to last March they exceeded £80 million. The operation is said to be profitable.

Among likely contenders for the three brands are the three biggest food companies - Nestlé, Unilever, and Philip Morris through its General Foods and Kraft subsidiaries.

SB said it was selling the brands because it wanted to concentrate on health-related products, and so would keep Lucozade, Ribena and Horlicks in its portfolio.

Labour costs fuel City inflation fears

By Colin Nerbrough
Economics Correspondent

Inflationary pressure from the continuing fall in unemployment are starting to ease, but the City remains concerned about the threat to inflation posed by the latest figures on unit wage costs. Government figures yesterday showed the downward trend in unemployment easing and average earnings growth steady.

The Retail Price Index, out today, is expected to show prices rising at an annual rate of 7.9 per cent last month, up from 7.7 per cent in November. The pound gained 0.3 on its trade-weighted index to close at \$8.1. It ended 2.37 pence up at DM2.8089, but shed 35 pence against the dollar at \$1.6460. A better-than-expected Wall Street opening helped London shares to recover from the day's lows, allowing the FT-SE 100 to close 37 down at 2,336.9.

Department of Employment figures showed unemployment up 27,000 last month on an unadjusted basis, but falling by 17,000 after seasonal adjustment to 1.64 million - the smallest monthly decline for three years. This cut the unemployment rate to 5.8 per cent from 5.9 per cent in November.

Government statisticians now estimate the trend fall in seasonally adjusted unemployment at a monthly 20,000 to 25,000, down from 30,000, suggesting that the 41-month decline in joblessness will soon be at an end.

An increasing number of economists believe that, given the rising level of pay settlements, an increase in unemployment will be necessary to cure inflation.

The labour market's softening could also be seen in a 1 per cent fall in hours worked in November, when overtime hours were the lowest since August 1987. Average earnings figures for the whole economy, also for November,



Sir Peter Gibbins, Anglia's chairman, left, and David McCall, chief executive yesterday

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Note: The calculation for the current value of the Ordinary Offer is based on the middle market quotation of 208p per Wassall share derived from The Stock Exchange Daily Official List on 17 January, 1990.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

British Gas finds oil at Beckering

Oil has been found by British Gas at a new onshore drilling site at Beckering, 10 miles north-east of Lincoln and near the existing BP Welton onshore field. A test well drilled to more than 5,000ft will now be suspended. Tests produced oil at 120 barrels per day plus minor amounts of gas. Subject to planning consent, it is expected that a long-term test well will now be undertaken to evaluate commercial feasibility.

The licence is 100 per cent owned by Gas Council (Exploration), wholly-owned by British Gas which discovered Britain's largest onshore oilfield at Wytch Farm in Dorset. Its interest was sold off by the Government prior to privatization.

Boots names chairman

Boots, the pharmaceuticals and retailing company, has named Sir Christopher Benson as the group's new chairman. He will take over at the group's annual general meeting on July 26. Sir Christopher, who became a non-executive director of Boots in April last year, will succeed Mr Robert Gann.

Mitie ahead at £276,000

Mitie Group lifted pre-tax profits to £276,000 (£76,000) in the half-year to September on turnover of £7.4 million. There is again no interim dividend, on eps of 4.9p (3.7p). The board hopes recent acquisitions, Mitie Cleaning & Maintenance and Multicote Painting Contractors, will contribute significantly to future growth.

Denmans up to £2m

Continued growth in the electrical wholesale business at Denmans Electrical, the Unlisted Securities Market electrical wholesaler, helped it to a 24 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £2.07 million in the year to end-September, on turnover up 24.2 per cent to £34.1 million. Earnings per share rose by 34.8 per cent to 33.55p and the final dividend is improved from 3.05p to 3.85p, making 5.4p for the year, up 20.8 per cent.

There is an exceptional credit of £328,000 and an extraordinary gain of £66,000. Following a property revaluation and record retained earnings, total net assets increased by 43 per cent to 189p per share. The shares climbed by 7p to 215p.

Bonus issue offer at NFC

The 45,000 shareholders in NFC, the former National Freight Consortium bought from the Government in 1982, are being offered a bonus issue of one new share for every two held, subject to approval at the annual meeting on February 25 in Blackpool. NFC is also planning an ADR listing on the American Stock Exchange.

United News in £24m buy

United Newspapers has moved into the Dutch trade exhibition market with the purchase of Mentor Marketing Services for up to £24 million. The vendors warrant that pre-tax profits of £2.05 million will be made this year. Initially, United will issue 4.5 million new shares to be placed at 425p each on behalf of the vendors.

Anglia's success is based on more than just Survival

Like the *Survival* wildlife programmes on which it based much of its early reputation, Anglia TV continues largely unchanged by the upheavals in the television industry.

It has a cautious foot in the satellite camp through its small founding stake in BSB, and a growing array of strategic stakes in local radio networks in its area which cannot, under existing rules, be expanded into full control.

But Anglia has ruled out any innovative diversification into other areas, leisure-related or otherwise, preferring to pin its hopes on a successful bid for its franchise. It is, therefore, stacking up its cash to that end, with some £24 million in the bank at the October 31 year end, despite another £9 million invested in BSB that month.

This cautious, even stodgy approach, continues to reap rewards. Pre-tax profits rose 15 per cent to £18.5 million, helped by a 14 per cent advertisement revenue rise, against a 9 per cent industry average. Although some flattening-out is inevitable, Anglia is confident it can retain market share.

Although programme sales in this country doubled to £10.6 million, in the US they were virtually static.

Anglia's defensive qualities have been recognized in a sector strewn with hazards. The shares command a relatively high rating, although have suffered with the rest as perceptions of the risks facing TV companies have heightened. They dropped just 3p to 259p.

Profits this year will inevitably be hit by a higher exchange rate but should be about £18 million, leaving the shares on a multiple of 9.3

times' future earnings, with the prospective dividend yield about 5 per cent.

In a sector which includes such expensive follies as TVS's acquisition of MTM, sticking to your last can be a positive virtue. There looks to be little downside at this level.

Stanley Leisure/ Allied Leisure

Falling disposable income has not prevented people from spending more than £100 a night in Stanley Leisure's provincial casinos; nor has it stopped them eating at Allied Leisure's Jazbo Browns restaurants after bowling at a 30-lane 10-pin MegaBowl.

Both fast-growing leisure groups emerged unscathed from the consumer spending downturn, reporting interim results ahead of forecasts.

Allied, the USM out-of-town leisure complex group, reported an 83 per cent pre-tax profit rise to £942,000 for the six months to end-December, with eps up from 2.46p to 4.91p. Full-year profits of £1.7 million (£950,000) are expected, with £3 million pencilled in for the following year as a return of more than 25 per cent of the group's £10 million-plus capital expenditure on its MegaBowls and Tower Park leisure complexes comes quickly on stream.

With its shares up 1p to 86p, it is trading on 9.6 times prospective p/e.

Over at Stanley Leisure, Mr Leonard Steinberg's betting and casino group which earlier this month bought 8 provincial casinos for £10.7 million from Leading Leisure, pre-tax profits were up 74 per cent to



Ian Parsons: aiming to make up for lost ground at Macarthy

£4.22 million in the half-year to end-October, with interim earnings per share up from 8.94p to 9.58p and the dividend up from 1.75p to 2p.

Stanley's steadily-growing income stream from its 17 provincial casinos has insulated it from the spending downturn afflicting London operators.

Mr Steinberg plans to buy about 100 more betting shops from a number of sellers.

"There is no sign of any drop in the spend per head - now £3.30 - or the number of bets," he said.

Stanley, trading at an 8 per cent premium to the all-share index at 243p but still seen as a

"buy" given its defensive qualities and strong management, is expected to report a significant rise in full-year pre-tax profits from £5.1 million to £8.65 million, putting it on a prospective p/e of 12.1 times.

Macarthy

Macarthy could have done without the legal wranglings that have darkened its life recently.

The fight with UniChem over that company's share scheme accounts for part of a £2.02 million extraordinary item charged below the line in

Macarthy's latest accounts, so another transfer from reserves has been made.

Now, Mr Nicholas Ward, former chairman and chief executive whose resignation was not unconnected with the consequences of the UniChem battle, has served a writ for unspecified damages.

Tough conditions in its market place may be partly to blame for Macarthy's unexciting performance in the year to end-September when pre-tax profits edged forward by only 6 per cent to £6.5 million.

But management's eye not being fully on the ball must also have played a part, and if the time devoted to solicitors had been more usefully deployed, then results might have been more respectable.

That profits crept forward on a 12 per cent fall in sales demonstrates some management success, however, and the final dividend rises from 7p to 7.5p, payable April 9, making 12.5p (11.5p).

Macarthy plans to make up lost ground under chief executive Ian Parsons and is concentrating on the bones of its business. Matters needing attention include gearing - an effective 60 per cent and a net interest charge of £2.31 million, up from £1.73 million; an improvement in wholesaling margins; and higher visibility on the retail side.

Pre-tax profits could nudge forward to £7 million this year, and the shares down 7p at 229p have the support of a yield of 7.3 per cent. However the p/e at 13.2 is looking some way ahead. Until the interim report demonstrates the recovery - and barring renewed takeover speculation - there should be no rush to buy.

Two buys in America for growing Blenheim

By Philip Pangalos

Blenheim Exhibition Group, the acquisitive Unlisted Securities Market exhibition and conference organizer, is making two further acquisitions - in America - for £11.93 million.

In one deal, Blenheim is buying, for \$15.3 million, Bobbin International, which organizes the Bobbin Show for the American clothes manufacturing industry, and Bobbin Media Corporation, publisher of trade magazines complementing the show.

The companies, which are both based in South Carolina, made pre-tax profits of \$1.52 million in the year to end-December 1988, with combined assets of \$349,000 at end-September 1989.

Blenheim has also acquired Spectrum Shows, which organizes consumer-oriented franchise and business opportunity exhibitions in California, for up to \$4.2 million.

Mr Neville Buch, Blenheim's chairman, said that the company was committed to controlled expansion in the United States through selective acquisitions.

The purchases add another industry sector to Blenheim's expanding portfolio and will help to raise its profile in America, the world's largest exhibitions market. The shares slipped by 10p to 98p.

Pillsbury cash

Pillsbury, Grand Metropolitan's US offshoot, is investing \$140 million (£85.1 million) to improve quality, reduce costs and enhance customer service at its three bakery products businesses over 18 months. It will result in the loss of 1,300 jobs, mostly in 1991, which will be offset by the creation of up to 800.

Rockfort in profits warning

By Matthew Bond

Lack of tenant interest and the virtual withdrawal of United Kingdom institutions from the property market lie behind yesterday's profits warning from Rockfort, the development group.

Mr Roger Smees, the chairman, gave warning that "activities in the second half of the 1989 are not expected to generate a substantial addition to profits already reported for the half year to June." The announcement knocked shares down 9p to 46p.

In the first half, Rockfort made £2.8 million pre-tax profits. Analysts who had been forecasting about £11 million for the whole of last year, hastily reduced their forecasts to about £3 million.

Rockfort's December year-end left it particularly vulnerable to the mini-collapse of the property market in the final three months of last year.

Avon revises profit after business sale

By Jeremy Andrews

Avon Rubber has decided not to consolidate the results of its loss-making Motorway tyre distribution business, the bulk of which was sold to Sumitomo Rubber last year.

As a result it is revising its pre-tax profits for the year to September to £12.5 million, from the £12.2 million reported eight weeks ago.

The additional £280,000 raised earnings per share from 41p to 42.6p, but Mr John Bradbeer, Avon's former finance director, said that the decision to revise the profits was "totally unconnected" with the news that Trelleborg, the Swedish group with rubber and plastics interests, has taken a 4.8 per cent stake.

The shares sank back 22p to 508p, but remained 80p above their level on Wednesday before the stake was disclosed. Mr Bradbeer thought that the setback was connected with press reports that Trelleborg did not intend to bid at

present. He said that he could not comment further on Trelleborg's position before a possible announcement today. Figures reported in December had not been audited and, at that stage, Avon had had a different understanding of its obligations under the Companies Acts and accounting standards than had emerged in discussions with auditors, Mr Bradbeer said.

In a statement, Avon said that the disposition of the shareholdings in Motorway Tyres and Accessories prevented the company exercising significant influence over it, and, accordingly, Motorway, although a related company, should not be accounted for as an associated company.

In May, SP Tyres, the British subsidiary of Sumitomo Rubber, paid Avon £22.2 million for a 70 per cent stake in Motorway and a 20 per cent stake in Avon's tyre manufacturing business.

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New management team rules out sale of Spanish stores group

Mountleigh falls to £20.4m

By Matthew Bond

Mr Nelson Peltz, joint managing director of Mountleigh, has brought in McKinsey, the management consultant, to help him decide what to do with the company's Spanish department store group.

Mr Peltz has given the consultant a month to come up with advice on the group's future, but a straight sale of the company, which analysts have reckoned could be worth £400 million - has already been ruled out.

"We are not considering a sale at all," said Mr Peltz

yesterday. He was in town to report Mountleigh's interim results.

He currently spends every other week in London on Mountleigh business, but plans to devote 100 per cent of his time to it by June when he can move his family here from New York.

In fact, yesterday's interims cover the last six months of the *ancien régime* of Mr Tony Clegg, the former chairman who stepped down last November after selling his stake to Mr Peltz and his partner, Mr Peter May. Mr

Peltz and Mr May own 22.5 per cent of the company.

In the six months to October, Mountleigh made pre-tax profits of £20.4 million, compared to £24.8 million in the equivalent period the year before. The interim dividend of 1.25p a share is being maintained. Below the line, a £4 million write-down reflects the continuing impact of Mountleigh's abortive approach to Storehouse in 1987.

According to Mr Peltz there are two options for Galeria: either float it or keep it. "We may end up keeping as big a

chunk as 100 per cent of the equity," he said.

But there is likely to be faster progress on disposals from the group's property portfolio, where Mr Peltz says Mountleigh's management has now identified the buildings it wants to sell. Assisting in this disposal programme will be Mr Paul Bloomfield, the man credited with much of the success of the company during the Clegg era and who now owns a 29 per cent stake in Benlox.

"Paul Bloomfield is providing transactions for us on a

non-exclusive basis. He is one of many people we would like to do business with."

The stock market is expecting much of Mr Peltz, noting that he and Mr May paid 200p for his shares in November, compared with Mountleigh's current price of 157p. Mr Peltz is aware of the pressure for Mountleigh to do a big deal, to show the direction it will be moving in post-Clegg. But he will not be rushed. He said: "For me to put everybody out of their misery with a deal that is not a great one would be foolish."

COMMENT David Brewerton

Bankers battle to keep Lowndes on the road

Bankers, lawyers and directors were once again closeted at Charterhouse last night battling to find a solution to the near insoluble, the debt burden heaped upon Lowndes Queensway. Wisely, perhaps, they were doing their best to keep the twists and turns of the negotiations out of the public gaze, although before much longer the owners of the business, the shareholders, will have to be told whether their investment is saved, diluted or lost altogether.

If it were just a matter of shareholders losing their investment, worth 8.5p a share, or a total of £27 million, when the shares were suspended in December, then there might not be too much of a problem. Shares are, after all, risk capital. Similarly, if it were simply a proportion of their loans that might be lost, the bankers might find the loss preferable to putting in fresh cash, which would, after all, be at risk from the day the cheques were signed.

But there is more, much more, to Lowndes Queensway than numbers on the balance sheet. The company employs about 5,000 people, who would lose their jobs if it closed its doors for the last time. In the furniture manufacturing business, having just as tough a time as the retailers, the loss of Lowndes would be serious for all, and terminal for a few. The same is true of the carpet business.

Then there is the whole question of confidence. Lowndes is not the only buyout suffering the pains of over-gearing, and all of them depend upon banking finance to survive. Failure of one of the Kings of the Buyout Road could bring down others, and then there would be more losses, more jobs gone and more stresses and strains among the suppliers. The ripples would extend into the property sector, where a major space-user would disappear in a market already over-supplied, putting pressure on developers, in turn rebounding on bankers.

For all those reasons, it is to be hoped that a solution is found. On strictly financial criteria, if the market is to rule, it may rule Lowndes into oblivion. But this country has not seen a substantial business failure for many years, and while it would give satisfaction to many to see the greed-driven buyout consigned to history, this would not help all those relying upon Lowndes for their daily bread.

Yorkshire conundrum

NatWest, Barclays and Lloyds, whose continuing independence is effectively guaranteed by the Bank of England, showed no inclination to afford any such privilege to their successful brother, the Yorkshire Bank. The £1 billion price paid by the ambitious National Australia Bank,

with others not far behind in the auction, shows why. Yorkshire may be a clean, successful bank. But the sale price rating of 13.8 times earnings compares with 7.3 for Abbey National and 8.7 times slashed earnings for TSB, which went the alternative route of flotation.

NAB had special reasons for wanting Yorkshire. It had bought Clydesdale and the Northern of Belfast from Midland cheaply but needed to fill these out by expanding into England. It will now make about £220 million pre-tax in the British Isles for a purchase cost of about £1.4 billion and have nearly built 30 per cent of its profits offshore in short order and without upsetting cultural problems.

But there is no reason to think the take-out price was out of line with acquisition values for medium-sized banks here or in North America. So the City is left with the conundrum of working out why the bid premium for a bank, apparently about 100 per cent, is so ridiculously high. But perhaps the lack of mystery is why bank shares are so lacklustre, even after a rare recent re-rating. NatWest, for instance, was unchanged despite making a £190 million profit on the Yorkshire deal. Barclays sells at 6.5 times stable earnings.

One enduring problem is that institutions have held all the bank shares they need for years and still fear more rights issues. Another is that the City is acutely aware of every problem hitting the banks, from Third World debt to NatWest putting in twice as many receivers in 1989 as in 1988. The steady rise in dividends is ignored. This rubs off on the likes of Royal Bank, Bank of Scotland and TSB, which should really be rated alongside medium-sized continental banks and not be dragged down by the despised groups of Lombard Street.

High-handed Halpern

Sir Ralph Halpern should re-think his refusal to disclose the size and recipients of a discretionary payment last year to senior executives of Burton Group including himself. Sir Ralph remained silent while his company secretary told the annual meeting that he was "not obliged to do so." Nor indeed were shareholders obliged to approve a share option plan, now looking rather generous, by which Sir Ralph stands to gain mightily. For better or worse they did so. The annual report makes no specific mention of this discretionary payment let alone why it was thought necessary. If Sir Ralph persists in his refusal, his advisers should remind him who owns the company and suggest that such high-handedness might be redressed by beefing up the non-executive presence on the board.

Standard issues profits warning

By Graham Searjeant, Financial Editor

Shares in Standard Chartered, the international banking group, shed 12p to 531p after Mr Rodney Galpin, the chairman, gave a warning that 1989 pre-tax profits before exceptional provisions were not expected to reach the previous year's £313 million.

He blamed problems in Britain and Australia and Brazil's failure to pay interest on debt. Leading stock-brokers, several of whom had been forecasting £350 million or more, quickly downgraded their forecasts.

Smith New Court now estimates £300 million, before exceptional items of £222 million made at the interim stage, mainly to downgrade problem country debt.

Brazil failed to meet interest payments in September. Unless there is a change of mind, it could cost Standard Chartered about £25 million in annual interest on its \$454 million (£276 million) exposure.

In a circular to shareholders outlining the group's previously announced property sales and the part-sale of its continental operations to

Westdeutsche Landesbank, Mr Galpin said that while much of the business was still performing well, trading since June "has been affected by the difficulty experienced by certain customers in the United Kingdom in meeting their obligations as a result of continuing high levels of interest rates."

The group had also suffered from "problems affecting much of the corporate sector in Australia."

The increase in provisions in these areas is understood to reflect general caution rather than a few individual defaults. Standard Chartered is thought to have lent up to £300 million to Bond companies in Australia, but to have greater security as an earlier lender than other international banks.

It has also been involved in four large management buy-outs in Britain, including MFI and Magnet, but has followed a policy of syndicating any large single exposures.

City analysts drew some comfort from the lack of any further caution over problem country debt.

Bookie buys in offing



Leonard Steinberg: not interested in acquiring more casinos

Stanley tops £4m

Stanley Leisure, Mr Leonard Steinberg's bookmaking and casino group which recently dropped out of talks for the Mayfair casino club Aspinall's, said it has no interest in acquiring more casinos but plans to soon buy about 100 more betting shops.

Stanley's pre-tax profits jumped 74 per cent to £4.22 million for the six months to

end-October. Interim earnings per share rose from 8.94p to 9.58p, and the interim dividend climbed from 1.75p to 2p.

At Allied Leisure, pre-tax profits for the six months to end-December jumped 83 per cent to £942,000 while earnings per share rose from 2.46p to 4.91p. The interim dividend was 1.1p (0.55p).

Tempos, page 22

Levitt buys back stake from LIT

By Jon Ashworth

Mr Roger Levitt, founder of the financial services group which bears his name, is buying back a 33 per cent stake held by LIT Holdings for £16 million cash.

The deal, subject to shareholder approval, follows a dispute between the two groups over their strategic direction. The differences had been brewing since LIT's surprise decision to purchase Johnson Fry, its rival, in January, 1989.

Mr Levitt, who will see his share in The Levitt Group rise to 84 per cent if the deal is approved, denied that there was any clash with LIT. "We are very grateful to them for helping benchmark the value of the group at a time when financial services were struggling."

"However, the decision to purchase 100 per cent of Johnson Fry came as something of a surprise."

Mr Levitt suggested LIT may have been more favourably disposed towards Johnson Fry since it accounted for a greater slice of group business. Either way, the alliance "didn't quite make sense."

Mr Christopher Castleman, chief executive of LIT, said there was no longer any commercial logic in holding the Levitt stake.

He said: "Johnson Fry is a direct competitor of The Levitt Group in financial services, and the idea of a strategic alliance was dead. LIT has far too much bank debt, and we are actively pursuing any options which will help us reduce it."

LIT has given warning that it expects to report a deficit in the second half of the current year because of losses in its US futures and options concerns.

Yorks Water deal

By Our City Staff

Yorkshire Water is investing £250,000 in a joint venture to save energy in pumping systems in water and other industries, its first diversification since privatization.

It has teamed up with Mr Maurice Yates, who has invented a metering device to measure pump efficiency, through a new company, Advanced Energy Monitoring

Systems. The "Yatesmeter," 50 of which are already in use in the water industry, is an electronic device to measure pump efficiency faster and more accurately so as to save energy costs in heavy process industries.

Yorkshire hopes to expand the business into other pump-using industries such as petrochemicals, mining and steel.

Halpern's salary comes under fire

By Gillian Bowditch

The performance of the Burton group over the past three years and the salary of Sir Ralph Halpern, the chairman, came under fire from shareholders at the annual meeting.

Burton shares fell 9p to 204p when Sir Ralph announced that sales growth from the beginning of September until last week was up 8.5 per cent on the same period last year. Like-for-like sales growth is likely to be considerably less than that.

One shareholder reminded

Sir Ralph of his five-year plan, presented to shareholders three years ago when they were asked to approve the controversial share option scheme which could have given Sir Ralph £8 million but was cut back to £2.5 million after protest from institutions.

Sir Ralph said then that the targets for the company were to increase profits by £40 million in year one, £50 million to £60 million in year two with profits of £400 million by year five. Instead

profits had risen by £30 million in year one, and by just under £15 million in year two. Analysts are expecting profits of about £200 million, down from £224 million for this financial year.

The shareholder wanted to know if the five-year plan was simply to help get the option scheme approved.

Sir Ralph said when the targets had been set no-one had banked on the "mini-recession" brought on in part by those who run our country."

Another shareholder asked about the one-year discretionary payment paid to certain senior executives, including Sir Ralph, on the advice of Mercer Fraser, the consultant. Sir Ralph's salary fell from £996,000 to £899,000 and would have fallen further had it not been for the payment.

Sir Ralph refused to reveal the size of the payment and said the group was not obliged to do so. He said motivating the management correctly was part of the group's philosophy.

Diet time for two-meals

One of the biggest men in the City - in girth if not in reputation - is getting smaller. Robin Bonham-Carter, uncle of film actress Helena Bonham-Carter (star of *Room with a View* and *Lady Jane*) is leading 30 of his colleagues at Gerard Vivian Gray, the stockbroking subsidiary of Gerard and National, on a sponsored diet in the hope of losing £5,000 for the Leukaemia Research Fund at the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street. Aged 54, Bonham-Carter, started his diet a week ago, weighing in at 21st 7lb and has lost a stone already. He intends to trim his weight to 17 stone within six months. The rest of the dieters will begin cutting down on February 1 and will have to have reached their target weights one month later. "He doesn't look that fat because he's so tall - about 6ft 2ins - but he is a big man," says Bonham-Carter's loyal secretary Karen Jarvis, who is determined to lose one stone. Bonham-Carter, the marketing manager at GVG, has been known as the Great White Hunter ever since his return to Britain from South Africa three years ago, and is also affectionately known among friends as "two-meals". He thinks they'll have to come up with a new nick-name soon.

Golden space

Jan Reed, chairman of Trilion, the television facilities and production group, is clearly a quick learner. It is after all ju-

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Blue bloods flooded

So much for the public school education of the stockbrokers at Cassandre, the so-called blue blooded firm of the City. An in-house Trivial Pursuit contest, which started several weeks ago with 27 teams of four, reached its climax on Wednesday, when the final was played amid much excitement in the battery - Cas-

speck for the staff canteen. And it was won, not by any of the bright young blue bloods, but by a team led by office services manager Diana Pinn with a messenger and two maintenance men. "They were all questions like 'Who plays Deirdre Barlow in *Coronation Street*?' " said one young broker, defensively.

More than a year since Trilion - then known for its losses rather than its programmes it made - won its David and Goliath battle with Olympia & York, the private company run by the brothers Reichmann whose corporate wealth runs to billions. This week Reed revealed how the £25 million O&Y paid for Trilion's six-acre studio site (it stood in the way of the £3 bil-



Sleeping passenger

A young banker with a German securities house - who has asked to remain anonymous for reasons which will become all too obvious - tells me that one evening last week, after a particularly long and tiring day (and the odd swift drink with office colleagues) he finally boarded a home-ward-bound train on the District Line, intending to disembark at Southfields. The motion, combined with the warm still air, quickly sent him off to sleep and he failed to awake when the train arrived at his destination. He slept blissfully on as it pulled in and then out of the next stop, Wimbledon, the end of the line. By the time he eventually came to, the late-night tube had reached its final stop at Upminster - at the opposite end of the District Line. This well-travelled passenger quickly calculated that he was by now some 38 stops away from home and then discovered to his horror that it had been the last train that night. "It's just as well that Mansion House is shut or it would have been 39," quips one close friend, who also reveals that the said banker was then forced to fork out almost £30 for a taxi to take him safely to his front door.

Live stock

Last night's edition of the *Yorkshire Evening Press* contained a "for sale" advertisement for a "Ladies real lambskin jacket. £50." It was listed in the five stock column.

Carol Leonard

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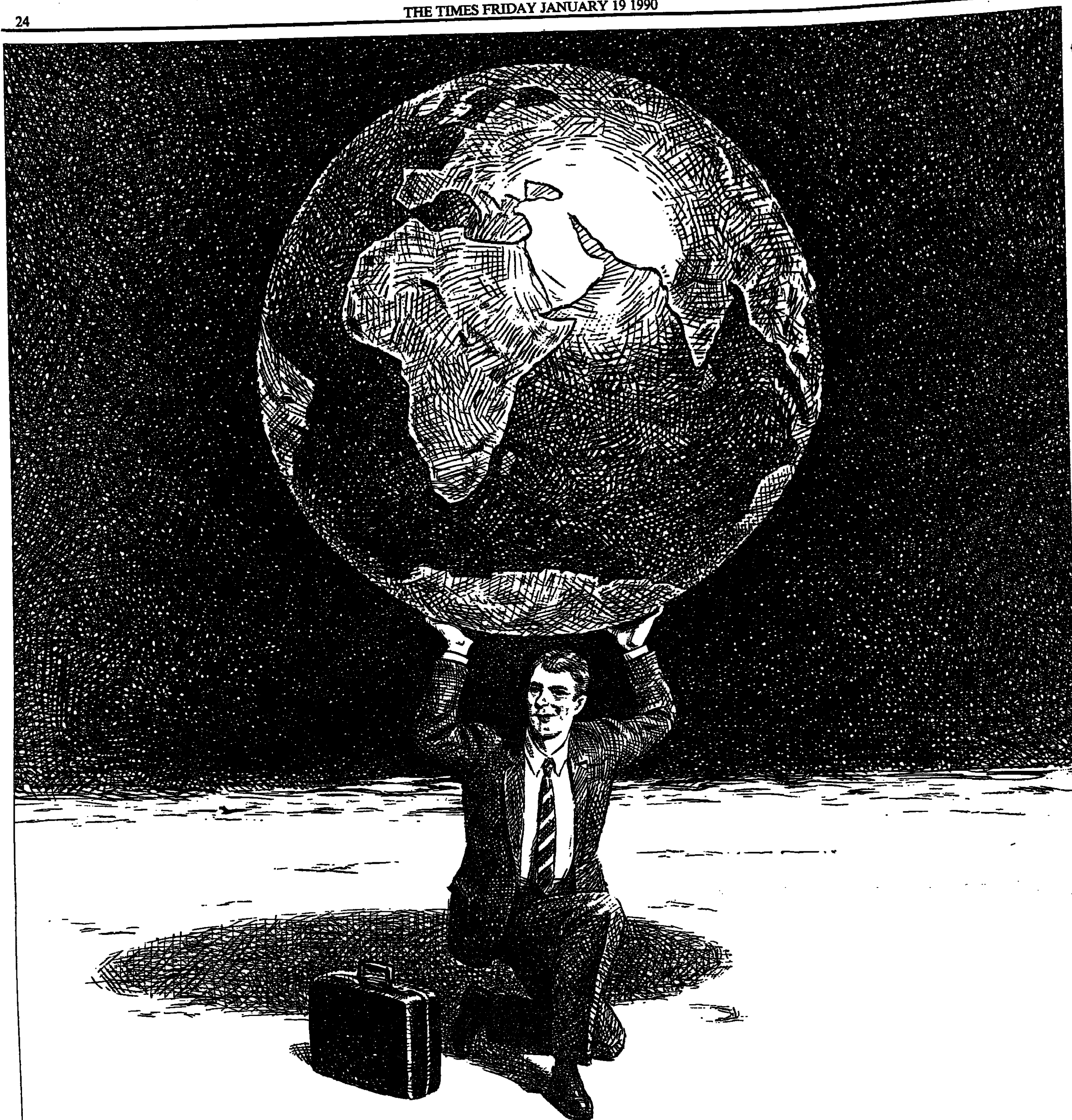
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Smiths wins contracts for European fighter

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

Smiths Industries, which has already gained some big contracts in defence avionics for multi-function displays to in-flight pilots, has won a series of development contracts for avionics systems in the European Fighter Aircraft (EFA) project, which should lead to production contracts worth about \$450 million.

With most of the awards, Smiths is part of European consortia and the Smiths share eventually is expected to exceed a third of the total. It has partners from West Germany, Italy and Spain, which, with Britain, are the countries behind the EFA project.

Development contracts worth \$45 million and fully funded have gone to consortia, in most of which Smiths is project leader or technical leader with design authority. Smiths should benefit from about a third of their value. The systems involve not only multi-function "head-down" displays for pilot information, but cockpit glare shields and engine control units.

One disappointed rival for supply of avionics systems is beleaguered Ferranti, but it

still appears to be a front runner for the EFA radar system, worth \$6 billion.

Mr Roger Hurn, chief executive of Smiths, said the company was confident of securing further "significant" EFA contracts.

Most of the new work will take place at Smiths factories at Cheltenham, Gloucestershire; Basingstoke, Hampshire; and Putney, south-west London.

The company's biggest share will come from the head-down displays, which have been sold also to McDonnell Douglas.

If the EFA project were dropped — there are suggestions that West Germany might pull out in the wake of political changes in the Eastern bloc — Smiths would not entirely be the loser because British and German defence authorities would still need a new-generation, agile fighter for the late 1990s, and McDonnell Douglas is the likeliest supplier.

Mr Hurn said: "Even if Germany did pull out, there is such a head of steam behind the EFA that it is likely to go ahead anyway."



Roger Hurn: confident of more contracts for aircraft project.

More tests by PowerGen on new fuel

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

A million tonnes of Orimulsion, a power station fuel developed by BP and the state oil company of Venezuela, is to be imported by PowerGen following trials at its Ince power station in Cheshire.

Orimulsion, an emulsion of 70 per cent heavy oil and 30 per cent water, has been developed and produced in Venezuela by Bitor, an off-

shoot of Petroleos de Venezuela, the state oil group.

PowerGen's decision to enter into a further contract with BP Bitor, a joint venture between BP and Bitor, follows trials in 1988 when a single burner was modified to allow burning of 200 tonnes of Orimulsion. This led to the a 500 megawatt boiler trial at the station last year. Mr Ed

Wallis, PowerGen's chief executive said: "Results, though encouraging, have not been conclusive. This long-term contract will make possible a bigger burn and enable us to look closer at the fuel."

The next stage of evaluation will take the form of full scale trials involving the burning of one million tonnes of Orimulsion in 1991 as part of a

programme which will continue for several years.

Orimulsion is produced from the world's natural bitumen deposits in the Orinoco belt in Venezuela.

It is estimated that recoverable reserves equate to twice the coal reserves in Australia. Tonne for tonne, Orimulsion has an energy content about 9 per cent higher than coal.

Soundtracs slips to £751,000

By Our City Staff

Pre-tax profits at Soundtracs, the USM audio equipment group, slipped from £822,000 to £751,000 in the year to November 6, on turnover up 10 per cent at £4.01 million.

The decline in profits comes after the company decided to write off research and development costs of £95,000 in the current year.

Earnings per share are reduced from 5.32p to 4.86p, and the final dividend is 1.35p, against 1.5p last time, making an unchanged total of 2.2p for the year.

Soundtracs makes computerized sound consoles for recording studios and broadcasters and exports more than 85 per cent of its products, with customers in the US, West Germany and Japan.

It was confident, it said, that the creative marketing approach taken, particularly in North America, would precipitate far stronger sales.

Mr Anthony Roberts has been appointed as financial director, replacing Mr Stephen Garbutt who now becomes a non-executive director.

Analysts feel the profits are of good quality and are positive about the overall situation despite a difficult British and Hong Kong market. The shares lost 4p to 41p.

US and Japan bolster ties between markets

Tokyo (Reuters) — US and Japanese regulators have strengthened and updated procedures for keeping in close contact during stock market turbulence.

At the end of a day of talks with Japan's finance ministry, Mr Richard Breeden, chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, said stability of markets was a critical priority for both countries.

"We updated and reviewed our procedures so that we can be in instantaneous and continuous communication in times of market stress, either in the US or Japan," said the SEC's chairman.

The ministry asked Mr Breeden about the impact of computer program trading on Wall Street during last October's mini-crash.

There were signs, it said, that such trading had played a bigger role in recent market moves in Japan.

Mr Masahiko Kadotani, director general of the Securities Bureau, said computer program trading had played a



Breeden: "Stability critical" relatively large role in the increased volatility of Japanese share prices at the end of last year and the beginning of 1990.

Program trading was likely to increase gradually in Japan, he added, noting that foreign securities companies had been more active than their Japanese counterparts.

Mr Breeden welcomed Japan's plans to open up its domestic investment trust business to direct competition from foreign companies.

"We recognize that process

needs to be reciprocal," he added.

The SEC was ready to propose changes in legislation in the United States governing mutual funds to improve the ability of Japanese investment trust companies to compete in the US, he said.

But the willingness of Congress to go along with this would depend on the progress made in removing the bigger barriers to foreign competition in Japan.

Mr Breeden said discussions among major nations on a common capital standard for securities companies were at an advanced stage.

"Capital adequacy is a very important part of building a stable framework for our marketplace."

He also said the two sides had discussed ways of moving toward a system that would allow companies to issue shares simultaneously in the US and Japan.

But, he added, that was a long-term goal that might not be achieved this year or even in 1991.

Peking to enter HK market

From Lulu Yn, Hong Kong

The China International Trust and Investment Corp, Peking's investment arm in Hong Kong, has struck a strategic takeover deal to give its assets a public listing.

It is taking over Tyfoll, a Hong Kong company with property and textile interests, with Tyfoll first acquiring CITIC's 38 per cent stake in Dragonair.

The move allows CITIC, a private company, to gain access to the colony's stock market without having to seek a public listing for itself.

It also paves the way for the acquisition of Hong Kong Telecom, the subsidiary of

Cable and Wireless in which CITIC is negotiating a 20 per cent interest.

Mr Larry Yung, CITIC managing director, yesterday hoped the Hong Kong Telecom deal would be finalized by the end of the month.

Under the proposed offer, Tyfoll will acquire Dragonair for HK\$374 million (£29.5 million), and then CITIC will buy 49 per cent of Tyfoll after disposal of Tyfoll's textile interests.

The Chao family, the owners of Tyfoll and founders of Dragonair, will retain a 13 per cent minority interest in the listed company while the rest

of the share capital will be offered to the public.

Cable Pacific, the Hong Kong airline, and Sware Pacific, its British parent, and Dragonair's second largest shareholder, together hold 35 per cent.

The flurry of activities by CITIC in recent months show Peking's desire to increase its economic domination of Hong Kong businesses.

It is estimated CITIC's acquisition of Dragonair, and its planned Hong Kong Telecom deal — the biggest ever investment held by a Chinese company in the colony — will cost about HK\$10 billion.

Davenport Vernon rises to £2.47m

By Philip Pangalos

Despite difficult market conditions, Davenport Vernon, the Home Counties multi-franchise car dealer which came to the market last March, saw pre-tax profits edge ahead from £2.43 million to £2.47 million in the year to end-September, while turnover advanced by 19.1 per cent to £90.2 million.

Mr Ralph Denne, the chairman and managing director, said the operating divisions improved their performance with an increase in gross profit, up 9 per cent to £7.48 million, demonstrating the group's resilience to tougher market conditions.

Earnings per share slip from

16.8p to 14.3p. As anticipated at the interim stage, there is a final dividend of 3.5p for the year.

New car profits increased by 6 per cent and used cars by 2 per cent. Service climbed by 9 per cent, while parts were 13 per cent ahead and petrol forecourts advanced 4 per cent. Engineering saw the greatest improvement, rising 79 per cent, although commercial vehicles fell 20 per cent due to the closure of Bedford Trucks.

Mr Denne said current trading conditions were difficult, but expected improvement in the second half.

The shares lost 5p to 93p.

Air France to raise £2.6m for UTA deal

Paris (Reuters) — Air France, the state-owned company said it will raise about Fr2.5 billion (£2.64 million) on capital markets to help finance the purchase of a majority stake in Union de Transports Aeriens (UTA).

Air France said it would pay about Fr5 billion francs for the 54.58 per cent stake it has agreed to buy in UTA from Chargeurs, the holding company, plus the 17 per cent privately held.

About Fr2 billion would be funded by existing credit lines and available cash resources, Fr500 million from unspecified asset sales and Fr2.5 billion on capital markets.

The company said it would go to the market for Fr2.5 billion, with an issue of bonds, investment certificates or other formula.

Air France has agreed to pay Chargeurs Fr4.083 per UTA share and guaranteed the same price to private shareholders. Chargeurs has also reserved the right to sell its remaining 28 per cent in UTA to Air France at a later date.

Air France said the Fr2 billion necessary for this 28 per cent stake, if Chargeurs sold, would be paid in at least two tranches in 1991 and 1992 but it had not been decided how this sum would be raised.

The company, being state-owned, is forbidden to raise capital via new ordinary voting shares but may issue up to 25 per cent of its equity capital in non-voting investment certificates.

Half-time profits leap by 236% at Jarvis

By Our City Staff

Profits continue to rise at Jarvis, the building contractor and property dealer, as it reaps the benefits of the reconstruction programme started more than two years ago.

Pre-tax profits surged by 236 per cent to £1.07 million in the six months to end-September, on turnover, boosted by acquisitions, advancing 75 per cent to £35 million.

Earnings per share rose from 3.6p to 3.8p and the interim dividend is improved to 0.825p (0.75p).

Mr Harvey Bard, chairman, said the first six months saw further significant progress



Bard: reorganization pays off with both divisions performing well. Average contract values have increased from about £750,000 in the early days to about £1.25 million.

Proceeds must be held in separate account

Bond wins court approval for Harriet oil stake sale

From David Tweed, Sydney

The Victorian supreme court judge presiding over the Bond receivership case yesterday gave court approval for the Bond group to sell its 57.7 per cent stake in the Harriet oil field for about US\$36 million (£21.9 million).

The sale of Bond Corp's share in Harriet, off the coast of Western Australia, was announced last November.

Settlement of the sale had been extended until today but Mr Peter O'Callaghan, counsel for the receivers, told Mr Justice Beach that unless the court approval was gained immediately, the entire deal would collapse.

Bond brewing is involved because it has a charge over Bond Corp's Harriet assets.

Legal arguments by Mr SE Hulme, QC, for the National Australia Bank (NAB), that the sale could be a breach of the disputed loan and credit agreement, and that the proceeds should be used to reduce bank debts of Bond brewing

were overturned by Justice Beach.

Mr Hulme claimed Bond Brewing had a seek-charge responsibility over the Harriet receivable and that the US debenture holders also had to give their consent to the sale.

The US debenture holders came only second to the banks in the settlement of debts but the NAB-led bank syndicate could be responsible in New York "if it were seen to be a party to a legal breach of the loan and credit agreement."

Mr Hulme said the bank syndicate — which has an Aus\$880 million (£419 million) exposure to Bond Brewing — was well disposed to the sale of the Harriet oil field stake but foresaw major loan agreement breach difficulties if the sale went ahead.

Mr Justice Beach said the matter was complex but commonsense dictated that consent be given to the Bond Brewing receivers and managers for the sale to go ahead.

He ordered the sale proceeds to be held in a separate interest-bearing account "and not dispersed without a court order."

Mr O'Callaghan told the court earlier that Mr Tony Oates, a Bond executive, had suggested the amount due to Bond Brewing would now be US\$36 million rather than the \$42 million previously expected.

In other developments, Bond Corp was preparing to send a huge legal bill to the West Australian State Government Insurance Commission (SGIC) after a decision yesterday by the West Australian supreme court that the commission must pay the full costs of its unsuccessful bid to wind up the Bond flagship.

Bond's legal team was delighted yesterday that Mr Justice Ipp had ruled that it should receive all reasonable "indemnity costs" for its court defence — that is, its full costs.



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STOCK MARKET

Share prices hit by fears for bonds

The equity market's roller-coaster performance is continuing with prices again beating a record retreat. Investors have been worried all this week about events in Tokyo and New York, but yesterday the bond market dragged shares lower with investors concerned about rising inflation.

Government securities ended with losses stretching to £1 at the longer end - for the second day in a row. Dealers say that the gap between the yields on equities and bonds is the biggest for some time and that a correction is inevitable at some stage.

A sharp mark-down by market-makers produced a few sellers although turnover generally remained depressed with only 450 million shares traded. The slide continued, accelerating before the start of trading on Wall Street where traders were predicting heavy falls ahead of the publication of the latest consumer price figures. But the Dow Jones industrial average managed to reduce an opening fall of 25 points in early trading. This enabled the FT-SE 100 index to close off the bottom with a drop of 37.0 points at 2,336.9, having been 47.7 down. The FT index of top 30 shares lost 30.9 to 1,864.4.

Ferranti added to the market's depression, tumbling 94p to 374p as Thomson-

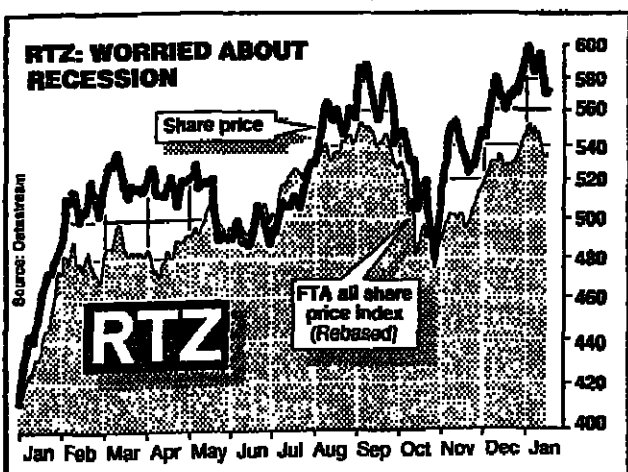
CSF, the French group, announced that it had withdrawn from bid talks. This withdrawal follows a similar move last month by Daimler, the West German group. Thomson is still exploring areas of co-operation with the troubled electronics group. Last week, Ferranti announced details of a £187 million rights issue and said that it is still in talks with three possible partners.

GEC fell 5p to 232p in sympathy with Ferranti, while Smith New Court, one of the few publicly-quoted market-makers, which suffered a hefty trading loss on Ferranti following the collapse in the share price last year and is

Not everyone was impressed by the launch of STC's new range of ICL computers. UBS Phillips & Drew, the broker, said it is similar to computers already on sale in the US and should have no long-term implications for the group. P&D still rates the shares, down 5p to 268p, as a sell.

now taking legal action, lost 5p at 94p.

Among the leaders, Lucas Industries stood out with a fall of 13p to 639p. Analysts, already worried that profits have been hit by the recently resolved Boeing strike, now fear the repercussions for the



group if the Ford dispute escalates. GKN fell 11p to 424p, also worried about Ford.

Satchell & Satchell, the troubled advertising agency, fell 11p to 231p after confirming that it had lost a £70 million (£43 million) corporate advertising account with Prudential Corporation of America. But the group would not comment on reports about job losses in London. The US account has been won by the rival Lowe Group, down 7p to 427p.

British Gas fell 7p to 221p despite the news of an oil find off the Lincolnshire coast. There is talk that Warburg Securities has downgraded its profit forecasts.

Standard Chartered, the international banking group,

was another depressed market, falling 11p to 552p after giving a warning that pre-tax profits this time would fall short of last year's £313 million.

The group blamed bad debts in Britain, corporate problems in Australia - thought to be related to the Bond Corporation - and the suspension of interest payments by Brazil. The price closed above its worst because some dealers believe that this latest setback for the group makes it even more vulnerable to a bid.

The rest of the banks suffered small falls in scrappy trading, cushioned by details of the proposed sale of the Yorkshire Bank. National Westminster, unchanged at 350p, owns 40 per cent of the

Yorkshire, Barclays, 2p easier at 558p, owns 32 per cent. Lloyds, 5p cheaper at 297p, 20 per cent and the Royal Bank of Scotland, 2p lighter at 201p, 8 per cent. Falls were also seen in Midland, 4p to 371p, Bank of Scotland, 2p to 116p, and Abbey National, 3p to 177p.

Worries about the effects of a recession sent RTZ tumbling 22p to 549p. The mark-down was prompted by the news of the drop in earnings at Alcoa, the world's biggest aluminium smelter, which accounted for a large part of the 33-point fall in the Dow Jones industrial average on Wednesday. RTZ also has big interests in aluminium and dealers fear that the downturn in the industry will take its toll on

Note the heavy turnover in Asia Group this week, with 28 million shares traded. BZW, the broker, remains a seller because it thinks the shares, down 3p at 112p, are too dear on fundamentals and has recently downgraded a profits forecast. But the Belzberg continues to hold a 5 per cent stake.

profits. County NatWest WoodMac, the broker, was quick off the mark in downgrading its profit estimates this week. It was followed yesterday by a rival, Smith New Court. Analysts are also worried about the

effect on RTZ of the falling copper price.

Monsieff, the property group, slipped to 160p after announcing a drop of £4.4 million to £20.4 million in pre-tax profits for the six months to October 31.

Wellcome remained under a cloud, retreating by a further 4p to 728p in the wake of this week's recommendation from the US Food & Drug Administration that the dosage of Retrovir, its anti-Aids drug, should be halved.

The pharmaceuticals team at Barclays de Zoete Wedd, the broker, says that recent tests have shown that Retrovir can be just as effective with smaller dosages. Its earnings forecasts have taken into account a gradual reduction in dosage levels during the next few years.

But the US recommendation is likely to quickly affect the way the drug is administered in the US and this will be reflected in profits. BZW now expects to reduce pre-tax profits by £40 million to around £380 million.

The recently-privatized water shares were not spared in the shake-out. Only North West managed to make any headway, adding 1p to 156p, while Welsh closed all-square at 164p.

Michael Clark

TOKYO

Nikkei retreats in volatile dealings

(Reuters) - Prices closed broadly lower after another day of volatile trading in which they fluctuated in a range of almost 500 points.

The Nikkei index sank 91.68 points, or 0.25 per cent, to 36,729.46. Late index-buying by foreign brokers lifted the index from its lows.

Falling bond prices, spurred by talk of another increase in the discount rate, caused a fair amount of the selling. Volume slipped to 530 million shares against 550 million on Wednesday. A Bank of Japan official said he knew of no plans to make any further changes in the discount rate.

Mr Shigeru Akiba, the head trader at UBS Phillips and Drew International, said: "We

can't see the bottom of the bond market right now and this is frightening investors."

A weak bond market was the main worry but a listless yen and political uncertainty also helped dampen trade. A market analyst said: "Investors will be hesitant to do much buying before the elections." Lower House elections are expected on February 18.

● Hong Kong - The Hang Seng index closed 16.83 up at 2,771.67. The broader-based Hong Kong index advanced 10.88 to 1,820.05.

● Sydney - The All-Ordinaries index finished 7.7 up at 1,682.8.

● Frankfurt - The DAX index closed at 1,799.40 - 23.08 points, or 1.3 per cent, down.

NEW YORK

Dow makes early rally

(Reuters) - The Dow Jones industrial average was off 11 points at 2,648.13 in early trading after being down 18 points at the opening. Technical support and bargain buying were responsible for much of blue chips' recovery from opening lows. The gen-

eral market improved as well, although it was still lower.

Digital Equipment's profits dip and a 0.4 per cent rise in December consumer prices were as forecast.

● Singapore - The Straits Times industrial index fell 0.22 of a point to 1,532.82.

WALL STREET

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Gatt talks vital for saving world trade system, says Ridley

By Colin Nurbrough, Economics Correspondent

The outcome of the "Uruguay Round" negotiations on freer world trade, due for completion this year, could well determine the survival of the multilateral trading system, Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, said last night.

The talks, held under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade for the past three years, offered the best opportunity to put right the deficiencies in the present system of world trade, he said.

Addressing a Royal Institute of International Affairs conference in London, Mr Ridley said that it was essential to clear the ground as much as possible in the early part of this year, or there would be too much left for the final negotiations in December and the chance of agreement would be missed.

He said that an effective multilateral trading system must survive because a retreat into protectionism could lead to a collapse in both world trade and output.

The mess that the Eastern European economies were in not only reflected stifling state



Ridley: warning over talks control, but also 40 years of protection which had ensured that their products were uncompetitive, Mr Ridley said.

He welcomed the Soviet Union's request for observer status at the Gatt.

The Uruguay Round, named after the country that hosted the opening talks, is trying to widen trade liberalization beyond manufactures to services and agricultural goods.

Mr Ridley said that, although Britain's views on the Uruguay Round were transmitted through the European Community, the Government was underlining the value of opening up markets and would ensure that the EC's

single market remained open to the outside world.

Having led reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, Britain recognized that freer trade in farm products was essential.

Furthermore, it had concluded that various voluntary restraint agreements which had existed for some manufacturing industries imposed a net cost on the economy that could not be justified for more than a relatively short period.

Mr Ridley said that some countries had become increasingly reluctant to observe Gatt rules. Some, notably the United States, tended to use unilateral sanctions in disputes.

Miss Joan Spero, senior vice-president of American Express, said that freer services - particularly financial services - might be the Achilles Heel of the round.

While she saw a strong agreement on services as critical to the success of the round, she said developing countries opposed the inclusion of financial services because they regarded national control as a central tool in development and feared that their institutions could not compete with the industrial world.

Eagle Trust to cut debt with sale

By Jeremy Andrews

Eagle Trust, the engineering and film camera company, is selling its Manchester building's merchant outlet to BMSS.

Eagle owes £99 million to its banks and the move, which will reduce indebtedness by £4.7 million, is in line with the strategy of Mr David James, the chairman, of disposing of non-core businesses.

BMSS, also a builder's merchant, is paying £2.18 million for Grundy & Pilling, C Scott and freehold trading properties occupied by Grundy. It is also repaying inter-company loans of £536,000 and relieving Eagle Trust of the business' £2 million overdraft.

The move is a large step for BMSS, which is capitalized at only £9.3 million with its shares at 128p. Part of the cash has come from a placing of 700,000 shares at 122p by Albert E Sharp and £500,000 is being temporarily withheld until the accounts for the year to December have been finalized.

Siemens move

Siemens has applied to the Federal Cartel Office to take over Nixdorf Computer, a move announced by the company last week. A Siemens spokesman said the company expected to make its application to the European Community authorities next week.

Designs on expansion with £1.4m



Patterns for growth: George Oakes (left), head of the design studios, with David Green

Colefax and Fowler ahead

Colefax and Fowler, the interior design group which has decorated the Bank of England and Buckingham Palace, increased pre-tax profits by 98 per cent to £1.42 million on turnover which more than doubled to £13.2 million (Stephen Leather writes).

Earnings per share rose 22

per cent to 4.83p for the six months to end-October and the interim dividend is being raised from 1.1p to 1.5p.

"Export sales have increased by 36 per cent on the same period last year," he said.

In Western Europe, France is the group's largest market and the company is negotiating to open a representative office in Paris. Italy and Spain are the fast-growing markets, said Mr Green.

Wehmiller makes £9m aerosol purchase

By Sam Parkhouse

Barry Wehmiller is to become the world's leading aerosol machinery company by the acquisition of Melville Engineering from the Melville Group for £9 million in ordinary shares.

The purchase of the Melville aerosol-filling equipment business, to add to its US interests, will leave Wehmiller commanding a 40 per cent share of the world market, said Mr Stewart Brown, the chief executive.

Mr Edwin Bisset, Melville Group's chairman, said the engineering business is being sold to free financial resources for "exceptional growth prospects" in Carlton Building Services - which is Europe's largest exhibition contractor - and the Melville Construction division.

In a separate deal, Wehmiller is buying Manesty Machines from Renold for £6.75 million, also in ordinary shares. Manesty is the sole British maker of machines to press and coat tablets for the pharmaceutical industry.

Wehmiller is financing the acquisitions by issuing 7.07 million new shares at 280p. Wehmiller's shares, which have risen 10 per cent in the last month, lost 9p to 305p while the Melville Group gained 8p to 133p on the news.

Lloyds Abbey Life has record year for new business

By Our City Staff

Lloyds Abbey Life, the group created by the controversial £1.1 billion merger of Abbey Life with Lloyds Bank's Black Horse life assurance and estate agency subsidiaries, has reported record new business growth for 1989.

Regular premium life assurance business rose by 15 per cent to £172 million, while single premiums increased by 43 per cent to £492 million, boosted by the strong pension market last year.

Mr Michael Hepher, chairman, said: "Particularly encouraging is the large rise in sales of the life and pensions products of Black Horse Financial Services - evidence of the growing relationship with Lloyds Bank."

The most dramatic increases came in sales of single premium pensions at Abbey Life, where the 347 per cent growth to £152 million accounted for four fifths of the single premium growth of the combined group. However, the rise is battered by

comparison with 1988, which was a poor year for the single premium business.

The company was heartened by signs that the association with Abbey Life had improved the more important regular premium business at Black Horse, which rose by 16 per cent to £40.2 million.

Against that, analysts pointed to the lowly 4 per cent rise to £103 million in regular premiums at Abbey Life itself.

This came on top of a poor 1988 for Abbey Life in this field, which helped explain its eagerness to negotiate the merger with Lloyds Bank in the closing months of the year.

The most cheering feature, according to Mr Peter Constable, insurance analyst with Robert Fleming, was the much-improved performance of Abbey's overseas life subsidiaries.

Regular premium business in Germany doubled to £20 million and rose by 57 per cent to £8.3 million in the Republic of Ireland.

Growth in paper to fall back

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

After three years of 5 per cent annual growth Europe's paper industry saw a slackening in demand last year and the prospect is for growth "to settle back somewhat."

The forecast was from Mr Bo Wergens, director general of the Swedish Pulp and Paper Association, who was speaking in London. He said Swedish sales to the United Kingdom of paper and paper-board last year increased by 5 per cent.

There was growth especially in the demand for newsprint and writing paper grades. Pulp sales to the UK showed a slight decrease.

Britain's own paper producers benefited from a healthy increase in paper consumption during 1989, he added.

Despite the coming slowdown there was still a satisfactory increase for the industry, said Mr Wergens. He added: "It should be possible to sustain increased turnover and satisfactory profits for the industry, with high operating rates for most grades."

But Mr Wergens warned European producers that more north American pulp and paper may come on the Western Europe market because the United States market was still less buoyant with demand virtually unchanged for the last two years.

Over the longer-term the prospects were bright, said Mr Wergens.

Statement today on Temple bid

Sea Containers' board was meeting in New York last night to consider the offer from Temple, the Anglo-Swedish consortium.

Under the terms of the deal, Tiphook, the British group, would buy its container leasing operations and Stena the Sealink ferries service.

Last night's meeting was also considering a revised recapitalization plan. A statement is expected today.

Plateau issue

A parcel of 7.8 million shares, or 41.8 per cent, of Plateau Mining, the exploration company, were placed yesterday with institutions at 90p a share, raising a net £6.5 million. A 1-for-4 offer of 8.5 million shares is being made to shareholders of Robertson Group.

Kyowa shares

Kyowa Bank, ranked 33rd in the world, was capitalized at £7.8 billion yesterday when it began trading on the Stock Exchange. Shares closed where they started at £6.15 after reaching a high of £6.20. Total volume was small at 900,000 shares.

Alcatel stake

Alcatel, the French telecommunications company, has acquired 49 per cent of Finom Mechanikai Vallat, of Budapest, to increase joint penetration of the microwave market in Comecon countries.

Trace the Family tree

Find out which bank has the shrewdest customers and why high mortgage rates are adding to the number of illicit tenants in Family Money to borrow. Compensating invest-

tors comes under scrutiny and safe, risky and expensive investments are checked out. There are also some thoughts on the danger of tall trees in your neighbour's garden.

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FOREIGN EXCHANGES

1989/90	Company	Prs	Offer	Share	%	P/E	1989/90	Company	Prs	Offer	Share	%	P/E	1989/90	Company	Prs	Offer	Share	%	P/E	1989/90	Company	Prs	Offer	Share	%	P/E
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181	182	183	184
185	186	187	188
189	190	191	192
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197	198	199	200
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265	266	267	268
269	270	271	272
273	274	275	276

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1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996	995	994	993	992	991	990	989	988	987	986	985	984	983	982	981	980	979	9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2 day: 15 7 day: 15 1 mth: 15%
 3 mth: 15% 6 mth: 15% 12 mth: 15%
 Selling Cdn (Pip): 1 mth: 15-18%
 3 mth: 15-18% 6 mth: 15-18% 12 mth: 15-14%
 Dollar Cdn (Pip): 1 mth: 8.25-8.25
 3 mth: 8.30-8.25 6 mth: 8.40-8.35 12 mth: 8.55-8.47
 Selling Swedish Cdn (Pip): 1 mth: 11.12-11.12
 3 mth: 11.15-11.15 6 mth: 11.15-11.15 12 mth: 11.15-11.15
 1 mth: 15% 15% 12 mth: 15% 15%

* Ex dividend * Ex all * Forecast dividend * Interest payment specified * Price at suspension of Dividend and yield exclude a special payment * Pre-merger dividends * Forecast earnings and other * Ex rights * Ex Acro or share split * Tax-free No significant data

GLD BULLION (Per ounce)
 Open: \$414.00-414.50 Close: \$412.75-413.25
 High: \$415.00-415.50 Low: \$412.75-413.25

GLD COINS (Per coin, Ex VAT)
 Bullion: \$421.00-428.00 (2250, 2250, 2250)
 Krugger: \$421.00-428.00 (2250, 2250, 2250)
 Mapin: \$421.00-428.00 (2250, 2250, 2250)
 Milled: \$421.00-428.00 (2250, 2250, 2250)

THIRD MARCH

9:00 17K-15K 9 min 15K-15K 12 min 15K-15K
 EC
 Road Race Starting Exp. Finance, Make-up day: Dec 29, 1989. Agreed rates Jan 24, 1990 to Feb 25, 1990. Scheme I: 15.00 per cent. Schemes II & III: 18.33 per cent. Refinancing rate Dec 1, 1989 to Dec 29, 1989. Scheme IV & V: 15.16 per cent.

American Eagles: \$421.00-426.00 (\$255.00-259.00)
 New Screams: \$58.50-59.50 (\$59.00-60.00)
 Old Soveraigns: \$98.50-99.50 (\$99.00-100.00)

PRECIOUS METALS

Platinum per oz: \$500.00 (\$504.00)
 Palladium per oz: \$135.75 (\$242.40)
 Spot Silver: \$6.25-6.27 (\$3.190-3.205)

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

COMMODITIES												
		FUTURES					FUTURES					
		Open	High	Low	Close	Vol		Open	High	Low	Close	Vol
128	FT-SE 100						Three month ECU					
129	Mar 90	2470.0	2394.0		Previous open interest 20940		Mar 90	95.58	96.02	Previous open interest 1838		
130	Jun 90	2428.0	2400.0	2404.0	2400.0	133	Mar 90	95.89	96.03	Previous open interest 1838		
131	Three Month Sterling				Previous open interest 13188		US Treasury Bond					
132	Mar 90	96.30	96.70	96.55	96.74	3769	Mar 90	96.00	96.04	Previous open interest 4157		
133	Jun 90	96.30	96.38	96.38	96.413		Long Gilt					
134	Three Month Eurodollar				Previous open interest 25940		Mar 90	87.25	89.06	Previous open interest 21911		
135	Mar 90	91.67	91.70	91.60	91.64	16993	Jun 90	87.16	87.24	Previous open interest 4983		
136	Jun 90	91.67	91.68	91.67	91.68	1603	German Govt					
137	Three Month Euro Dm				Previous open interest 35878		Mar 90	93.20	93.52	Previous open interest 885		
138	Mar 90	91.87	91.37	91.20	91.34	1668	Jun 90	93.50	93.82	Previous open interest 909		
139	Jun 90	91.28	91.29	91.22	91.35	1688	Mar 90	93.50	93.80	93.18	93.30	3702
140							Jun 90	93.50	93.80	93.18	93.30	3702

COMMODITIES

KCS-LOS Group			LONDON FOX		LONDON METAL EXCHANGE					
Traders, eager to take advantage of recent gains following the latest downward spiral, bought the market back up. Producers are relaxed, but hedging in limited demand and the others waiting with the screen.			COCOA		Official prices/previous day's					
			Jan 18/18		(P/tonnes)					
			Mar		Cash					
			Sep		3 months					
			Vol		Vol					
CRUDE OIL/assessed (\$/BBL FOB)			COFFEE		Copper Ore A					
Brent P/Jan	20.30	+25	Jan		1448.0-1449.0					
15 day Mar	20.40	+20	Feb		426.00-427.00		336800	Steady		
15 day Mar	19.50	+20	Feb		Zinc Hf Ode*		1459.0-420.00	63575	Steady	
WTI Feb	22.30	+45	Mar		Spec Spec H*		1292.0-1293.0	14450	Quiet	
WTI Feb	21.50	+15	Jul		1250.0-1252.0		1280.0-1281.0	10525	Steady	
			Aug		Aluminum H*		6780-6790	5800-5820	10025	Steady
					C Cane Sugar		1598.0-1600.0	1590.0-1591.0	541250	Biry Shy
					Nickel*		6830-6850	6730-6750	151250	Easy
					1 (Cents per Troy oz.)		(\$ per tonne)			
COFFEES Bay/leaf \$/BTL			FOR		Vol					
Spot CF NW Euro - prompt delivery			Mar		Mar 318.0-18.5		Oct 305.0-48.7			
Arabica	24.25	+20	Jul		May 315.5-18.5		Dec 309.5-28.0			
Gescol Esc	15	+17	Aug		Aug 316.4-18.2					

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Portfolio

PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your overall total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the daily prize money stated. If you win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No.	Company	Share Price	Dividend
1	Nat Aust Bk	100.00	1.00
2	Cap & Counties	100.00	1.00
3	Macro	100.00	1.00
4	Eng Chas Clay (as)	100.00	1.00
5	CGP	100.00	1.00
6	Rea Bros	100.00	1.00
7	King & Sherson	100.00	1.00
8	Lancaster	100.00	1.00
9	Purvis	100.00	1.00
10	Nelson-SNA	100.00	1.00
11	Intl Bus Comm	100.00	1.00
12	P-E International	100.00	1.00
13	Spasmo	100.00	1.00
14	Vesper Theory	100.00	1.00
15	Black (ABC)	100.00	1.00
16	MY Holdings	100.00	1.00
17	Lee (John J)	100.00	1.00
18	Pavilion Leisure	100.00	1.00
19	Carte Foresters	100.00	1.00
20	Scourguard	100.00	1.00
21	Multiline Elect	100.00	1.00
22	Edin	100.00	1.00
23	Met Trust	100.00	1.00
24	Lockers	100.00	1.00
25	Oliver Hilda	100.00	1.00
26	Claydon	100.00	1.00
27	Jacob (GD)	100.00	1.00
28	Buckingham Int	100.00	1.00
29	Capital Radio	100.00	1.00
30	Casik	100.00	1.00
31	Oxford Instruments	100.00	1.00
32	Exp Comp Logistics	100.00	1.00
33	Waverley Cam	100.00	1.00
34	Park Foods	100.00	1.00
35	Black	100.00	1.00
36	TNT	100.00	1.00
37	Sig Furniture	100.00	1.00
38	Adrian Group	100.00	1.00
39	Wilson (County)	100.00	1.00
40	Christie Int	100.00	1.00
41	Am New Z	100.00	1.00
42	Phys	100.00	1.00
43	Mass Bus	100.00	1.00
44	Wessex	100.00	1.00
45	Oxford Newspapers Ltd	100.00	1.00

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend
Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £12,000 in tomorrow's newspaper.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun

BRITISH FUNDS

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

SHORTS (Under Five Years)

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

UNDATED

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

INDEX-LINKED

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

BANKS, DISCOUNT HP

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

ELECTRICALS

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

DRAPERY, STORES

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

HOTELS, CATERERS

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

INDUSTRIALS A-D

High	Low	Share	Price	Change	%	P/E

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES

Substantial falls

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began January 15. Dealings end January 26. Contango day January 29. Settlement day February 5.
Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days.

Prices recorded are at market close. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Where one price is quoted, it is a middle price. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices. (as) denotes Alpha Stocks. (VOLUMES: PAGE 26).

BREWERIES

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

BUILDING, ROADS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

FINANCE, LAND

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

FINANCIAL TRUSTS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

FOODS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

CHEMICALS, PLASTICS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

E-K

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

L-R

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

S-Z

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

INSURANCE

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

LEISURE

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

MINING

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

MOTORS, AIRCRAFT

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

SHIPPING

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

SHOES, LEATHER

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

NEWSPAPERS, PUBLISHERS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

OILS, GAS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TOBACCOS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

WATER

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

Portfolio

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Claims required for +24 points
Claimants should ring 0254-53272

OVERSEAS TRADERS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

PAPER, PRINT, ADVERTISING

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

PROPERTY

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TEXTILES

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

TOBACCOS

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

WATER

1989/90	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E

© Ex dividend is Ex at Forecast dividend & interim dividend passed & Price at suspension & dividend and yield exclude a special payment & Pre-merger figures & Forecast earnings & Ex other & Ex rights & Ex scrip or share sp4 1 Top-free ... No significant data.

MOTORING

The numbers that don't add up

TED BATH

Can someone explain why the numbers on the personalised registration plates of cars sold by Cecil Parkinson are so high? The release of the Department of Transport and Vehicle Licensing Centre file?

Prices have more than doubled for the exclusive registration plates only a month after being auctioned for the Department of Transport by Christie's.

Dealers are cashing in on the enthusiasm of motorists to own the prestige numbers by offering plates for sale at a premium over the prices fetched at the Christmas clear-out.

Lawrence Rose, who heads Vehicle Registrations in Northwich, Cheshire, has sold the number F1 GHT, which cost him £11,000 at Christie's, for about £25,000. He expects MUS 1C - for which he paid £71,500 - to fetch as much as £200,000 and is negotiating now with several prominent but undisclosed names.

TON 1C - which was auctioned for £14,000 - has appeared on sale at an astonishing £45,000. I would need a substantial one after paying that kind of money for four letters and a number.

Cecil Parkinson hit the jackpot when he sold off rare registration plates. But why do people pay tens of thousands for an eccentric number on their car?

But at least I understand why TON 1C and MUS 1C might be eagerly sought. A search through the lists of numbers on sale this week reveals many that make absolutely no sense to me at all, yet motorists seem willing to hand over the equivalent of the cost of a small car to get their hands on these bizarre numbers.

What is so special about LCO 27, for instance, that it should cost almost £2,000 to own? Or GIL 1498, admittedly a snip at £450? Presumably the present owner of DEN 348 is hoping for the unlikely combination of a Denis who happens to own a Ferrari 348 to come along, ready to fork out nearly £5,000.

More and more plates seem to be advertised, but the price is rarely right for the average motorist looking to add a little distinction to his runabout. For example,

I SELL was up at £45,000 this week while £24,000 was being asked for DDD 1.

Meanwhile, the registration described as the ultimate Lamborghini plate - LAM 130 - was on the market at £60,000. Yes, I know. Why is LAM 130 the ultimate plate? It is little like screwing up your eyes to look for imaginary faces in the clouds. The 1 and 3 have to be pushed together to make LAM 130.

No doubt, there will be anxious buyers lining up for all these, as well as the cherished plates sold off by the Department of Transport. Rose says he has been inundated with calls from potential buyers for the 10 numbers he bought at auction at a cost of about £300,000.

MUS 1C was one of 74 cherished plates put up for auction by the department, fetching a total of



Parkinson with the number plate that says it all - BUY IT: one auctioned for £71,500 now has potential buyers prepared to pay £200,000 for it

£1.54 million, more than twice what was expected by experts at the DVLC. Parkinson thought the department could bring in about £15 million annually from the numbers sale, but the first auction and the wave of interest that has

followed it almost certainly means he will be able to raise his sights. As many as 200,000 motorists will be able to get their numbers cheaply next August if they are buying a new car. The registration year letter is H and the department

will offer numbers to the select motorists who want such things as H11 CAP or H1 FAB and so on for the price of the government transfer charge of only £80. Why would they want to? I have no idea, but at least they seem to

be on a winning investment, because there are thousands more motorists ready to spend the mortgage money on a dash number. Take my advice - £80 will buy a night at the movies and a good meal for two afterwards.

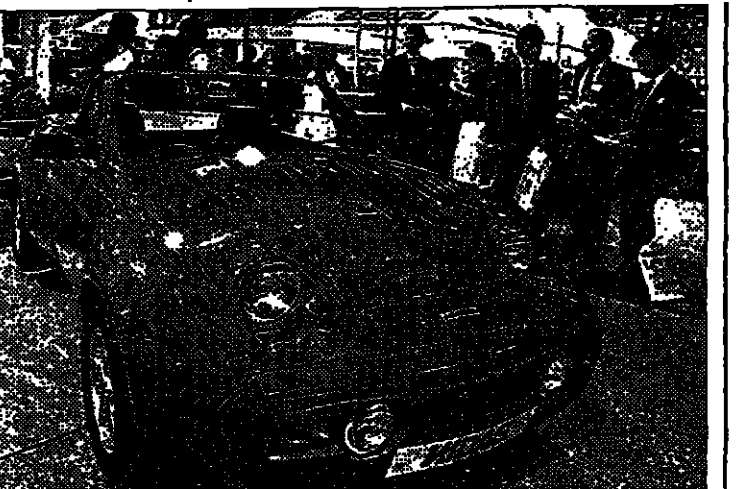
Midas for sale out of ashes

For 10 years, Harold Dermott had the golden touch with his fashionable little sports cars. The former Jaguar engineer made Midas Cars into one of the most respected businesses in the kit car industry (Tim Healy writes). Despite dumpy looks and composite glass fibre bodies, the Midas coupes were hailed by enthusiasts as the "Froggy Sprite of the 90s".

Order books were full for the 70 hand-built cars rolling off the production lines of the small factory in Corby, Northamptonshire, and a new convertible had helped arouse the interest of the world's keenest novelty car buyers, the Japanese.

But before the dream could be realized, fire swept through the factory causing £150,000 damage. Although the firm was insured, it could not stand the cost of the lost production and Dermott has been forced into liquidation.

However, Midas may yet rise



The Midas: Ford, General Motors and Chrysler were all fascinated

from the ashes if a buyer can be found for the business, started by Dermott and his small team. Bulley Davey and Company, of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, which is handling the sale of assets, says several businessmen are interested.

Whoever buys it will acquire one of the most admired marques in the kit car field. The Midas is based on a Metro engine and chassis arrangement and sold as a kit because of Britain's complex

Type Approval regulations. Buyers paying about £13,500 for a 1.4-litre convertible had to fit the exhaust pipe and front seats and bleed the brakes to comply with the law. Those willing to fit a second-hand engine and carry out extra assembly could halve the cost. But it was the one-piece composite body that fascinated the industry. Ford, General Motors and Chrysler bought coupes to test the potential of the all-plastic car in the United States.

Only the price tag is different

The customer climbing the executive ladder with £20,000 to spend on a new car must believe that he has the chance to buy something quite different from the "look-alike" saloons that clutter the company car park.

What he in fact gets is a bigger version of the "look-alike" saloon he has just left behind... and a car that looks pretty much like everything else from any other maker.

It is one of the sad facts of motoring life that cars seem more and more like one another - even at executive level - as designers search for low aerodynamics and

ROAD TEST

accountants demand low production costs.

Take a look at two new entrants on the company car scene - one from Saab and the other from Ford. Apart from obvious cosmetic differences such as the radiator grille and door handles, you could be looking at sister models. Yet one comes from Germany and the other from Sweden. Just as disappointing, the new Granada saloons look like a stretched Sierra Sapphire.

The only hope is that perfor-

mance justifies the lack of exterior originality - and here the Saab CD range is clearly the loser in the 1990 line-up of new executive models.

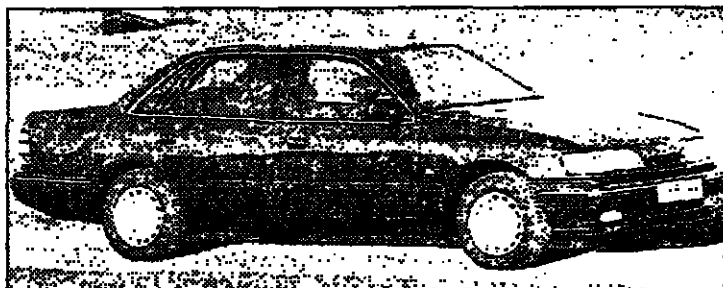
New 2.3-litre, 16-valve engines are fitted with a catalyst as standard, but still disappointingly as a straight four-cylinder. Despite the 150 brake horsepower available, that gives the big Saab the roughness of a smaller car. On a CDS test model, anti-lock brakes were standard, but the electric sunroof was a £195 option for the buyer to add to the £18,995 on-the-road price.

From Ford's new range of

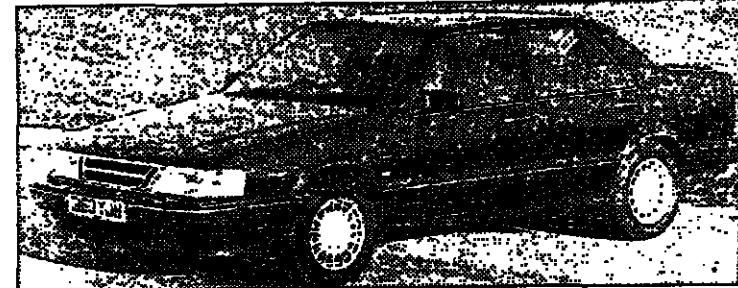
saloons, unveiled this week at the Brussels Motor Show, a Granada Ghia 2.9i saloon will also offer 150 brake horsepower but from a smooth V6 power pack. Although it costs £19,435, the power sunroof comes as standard in the Ford package as do the anti-lock brakes.

Apart from nipping differences, there is little to choose between the two. Both are roomy, their performances are similar and both will have good resale prices.

The only danger will be managing to pick out your car from the rest on a dark evening on the office forecourt.



The Ford Granada from Germany, left, and the Saab CDS from Sweden: apart from the radiator grille and door handles, they could be sisters



CAR BUYERS GUIDE

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COLLECTOR DISPOSING OF THE FOLLOWING CARS

Rolls Royce Phantom V, 1962 Mulliner, Park Ward 7 seater Lincolnshire. Dual AC electric on-board clockwork etc. ES. Auctioneers car. £45,000.

Rolls Royce Silver Cloud III 1965. Camille/Dark Grey with Bagby leather. £25,000.

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The tennis heroes of my youth, Kramer, Gonzales, Rod and Rosewall, were hounded by the amateur zealots of the International Lawn Tennis Federation (as it then was) into poorly lit suburban halls in their pursuit of an honest dollar as professionals. It was hypocritical hubbub, and up to 1968, when the game went open, it cost many great players some of their best years in the grand slam events.

The Ford Australian Open is being staged against the background of a double irony. The ITF is hot-foot in desperate pursuit of the professionals with the biggest financial prize in the history of the game, \$6 million, and the professionals are pretending, even protesting, that they are not interested. We shall see how long.

In the tenuous relationship between players and administrators, which seems to have existed ever since I first picked up a pen, both sides are telling massive fibs and expecting us to believe them. Nothing changes.



David Miller

The news release of the proposed Grand Slam Cup, scheduled to be staged next December, was, in public relations terms, on a par with Pearl Harbor. It dropped at supper time, missed the European first editions, and incensed the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) and the West Germans when they learned that, without consultation, the event was to be staged in Germany a month after the ATP \$2.5 million finals in Frankfurt.

The comment by Philippe Chatrier, the ITF president, in December's *ITF News*, that "I did apologize profusely to the Germans for the fact that they had been informed that they were being planned," was one of the sayings of the year.

Equally true is that Boris Becker, who stages many exhibition events in conjunction with the German Federation, and, it should be said, has had too big

a commercial interest in the handling of the Davis Cup in Germany. Anyone who can pull a first one on Tinas, it might be thought, is to be congratulated.

Becker, predictably, has said he will not play in the Grand Slam Cup — an eight-player event among the top grand slam performers. Ivan Lendl has said he will. Always a pragmatic man, Lendl, John McEnroe, who has been revealing this week that his touch is at times as subtle as ever, is being equivocal. What else? Within five minutes at a press conference he said the cup was "not good for the game," but that he was "not saying it was bad for the game." He might not enter. A likely story.

One of the arguments against the cup, put forward by ATP with pained innocence, is that December is the time for taking a rest. Another fall story. Players are earning a million in exhibition events where there is someone who will pay them to do so.

Neal Fraser, the former Wimbledon champion and

the Australian Davis Cup captain, who missed open tennis by a few years, puts the issue in perspective. "I just wish it had been around in my day," he says with a laugh. "I think the players are lucky and should be grateful. The prize-money is not disproportionate when you consider the ATP bonus money last year. As for taking a month off, nobody does that nowadays unless he's injured."

Hamilton Jordan, the executive director of the ATP Tour, can hardly complain at being seemingly outmanoeuvred. The four grand slam committees have been planning some kind of consolidation ever since the day after Jordan precipitated ATP's own, breakaway tour, during the US championships of 1988, with the consequent dismantling of the Mens International Professional Tennis Council on which the ITF was a partner.

Just as the creation of the Grand Slam Cup is logical, so was ATP's decision to handle its own affairs in the same way as the professional games do; though it will require a

marked increase in their sense of responsibility for them to do so successfully. The disciplinary section of their new manual is as thick as your thumb.

The ITF was renowned for its insensitivity towards the players on many issues: such as Chatrier's banning of the French championships of anyone playing in Team Tennis, which possibly robbed Connors of a grand slam. The ITF provoked the players into rebellion and their own tour, yet with the grand slam events excluded this year from the new ranking points-system of "best 14" events — the grand slam committees had to wonder whether it was they who were now threatened.

That sage of the game, Ted Tinling, believes the committees panicked, reacting to the "nightmare" scenario that the players would boycott the grand slam events. Like Fraser, he believes they are traditionally strong enough to be safe. If that is so, was the grand slam committees' action one of revenge rather than rationalization? Mike

Davies, ITF's executive director, was once sacked by ATP.

Geoff Pollard, the president of Tennis Australia, and Brian Tobin, his predecessor, who is now executive vice-president of the ITF in London, deny this. Pollard, who has only been involved since October, says that the committees' position was defensive, because they found themselves out on a limb, even though they were the four biggest tournaments. Tobin says: "The attitude was never one of sticking a knife in ATP, even if you got one or two individuals who are emotional. The grand slams had to look after themselves, and I hope the aggression will die down."

David Markin, the US representative, doggedly refuses to make any concessions to ATP, which had demanded \$1 million for supplying supervisors, umpires, managers and physiotherapists to the four grand slam events. But Pollard and Jordan, seeing the light, issued a joint press release at the beginning of this week, promising collaboration during the fortnight in the interest of the game.

The Grand Slam Cup, devised by Dr Axel Meyer-Woelden, a German lawyer,

answers, if nothing else, the players' demands for a greater share of the profits from grand slam events yet without costing them a dollar, because Meyer-Woelden's signed guarantee of \$6 million comes from television, including a further \$2 million to be paid into the ITF trust fund for future development around the world.

Although it is difficult to see how Tinas and the German Federation are going to be placated, a meeting of the two sides the day after the Virginia Slims finals in New York, suggests there is an element of common sense in the air. Tennis Australia would rather have had a larger gap between the Grand Slam Cup and their Open; but as the most vulnerable of the four they are glad of the consolidation. It has to be wondered why, for instance, Lendl, Becker, Edberg and McEnroe this year decided to play the whole of the Australian circuit.

Becker struggles while he considers meaning of life

From Andrew Longmore
Tennis Correspondent
Melbourne

Boris Becker survived one of his more distracted days in reaching the third round of the Australian Open in Melbourne yesterday. Becker beat Scott Davis, but dropped a set, had words with the umpire, smashed his racket and generally looked out of sorts with himself. There were reasons for his uncharacteristic turbulence and he had little to do with Davis, who is a solid professional given to odd moments of real class but no match for the Wimbledon and US champion.

No, Becker had other, weightier things on his mind as he struggled to find his touch: like life, freedom, retirement and Greenpeace. In an article published today in *Sports* magazine in Germany, Becker has revealed depths of his character hitherto untold.

At times, he says, he wants his freedom so badly he feels like retiring at the end of the year; at other times, he wants to be No. 1. He will definitely retire at the age of 25 and wants to work as a coach to younger players. He wants to play in all-white without any

sponsors' logos on his shirt, and to write a book about the tennis circuit. He wants to play in a united German Davis Cup team, and work for Greenpeace.

"I am no longer a boy. I have other thoughts now," Becker said yesterday. "I don't care if people attack me, I can't please everybody. If I try to, I would have no character of my own."

Clearly, in recent months, Becker has discovered a world outside tennis and is beginning, quite naturally, to explore it. The problem is not just that, as an internationally renowned sportsman, his voyage starts at a different point from most 22-year-olds, but that it must be made in full view of the world. As he said last year, he cannot really be pinned down by age; in some things he is aged 15, in others 35.

Either way, compared to the brave, idealistic outpouring of a young romantic, the match with Davis had little of merit. Becker had one of his less mobile days, and, particularly in the middle of the second set, Becker having taken the first, the match existed in a pleasant void. That was partly because of the stalemate on

court, both men holding serve comfortably, partly because the sun reflecting off the glass made the electronic scoreboard invisible.

The scoreboards are the least impressive part of the modern national tennis centre at Flinders Park. The roof of the centre court may be able to close in 17 minutes, but the scoreboards tend to go blank after almost the same length of time, which makes watching less stressful but also less meaningful. Even when they do work, on the outside courts, the players are often left anonymous and the scores of the completed sets are not recorded.

Given the way he was playing, Becker might have preferred to remain anonymous. His ground shots had no rhythm, his return of service was erratic and his volleying did not have the usual precision. Yet such is the strength of his game, Becker at his most humdrum is still a match for almost anyone and, except for a brief period in the third set, Davis, winner of the New Zealand Open last week, was not playing well enough to take advantage of the lapses.

On the court next door,

Stefan Edberg was enjoying one of his easier days against Becker's Davis Cup colleague, Patrick Kuhn. Edberg dropped a set to the German at Wimbledon two years ago, but he was never seriously in danger of doing so again, winning 6-2, 6-2, 6-4. The main surprise about the wistful Swede at this Open is that he has elected to play doubles in for the first time in a year. A chance phone call initiated a pairing with Pat Cash, which has certainly excited the local females. Edberg wants to work on his speed, Cash is on his way back from serious injury. It is a partnership of convenience. "I would only be practising on those days anyway, so I may as well play doubles," Edberg said.

In the men's draw, the seeds seemed to disappear two-by-two (though at the time of writing Noah himself is still in). Yesterday, Andrei Chesnokov and Jim Courier disembarked. The Russian was beaten by Mark Woodforde, who specializes in upsets. Last year, the Australian left-hander beat Noah in the first round, the year before he knocked John McEnroe out of the US Open. Having recovered from two sets down against Mark Kratzmann in the first round, the Russian could not find the inspiration for an encore and, troubled by a recent change of racket, lost in straight sets.

Courier, the No. 14 seed, lost to Jonas Svensson, the man who beat Becker this time last year.

In sympathy with her countrymen, Chesnokov, Natalia Zvereva, the No. 10 seed, bowed out, beaten by Sandra Wasserman, of Belgium, 7-6, 6-1. Belgium is one of 16 different countries represented in the last 32 of the women's singles, which shows how international the game has become.



Distracted: Boris Becker trying to keep his mind on the game in Melbourne yesterday

RESULTS FROM MELBOURNE

Men's Singles: 1st round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 2nd round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 3rd round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 4th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 5th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 6th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 7th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 8th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 9th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 10th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 11th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 12th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 13th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 14th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 15th round: J. McEnroe (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 vs. J. McEnroe (USA); 16th round: J. 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ICC urged to consider captains' orders

From John Woodcock
Adelaide

The call for an international panel of umpires, to be drawn on as and when opposing countries wish, is now too widely heard and significantly supported to be postponed beyond the next meeting, in England in the summer, of the International Cricket Council (ICC).

Seldom a Test match passes these days, let alone a whole series, without the captains espousing the cause, believing it to be the best way of eliminating controversy.

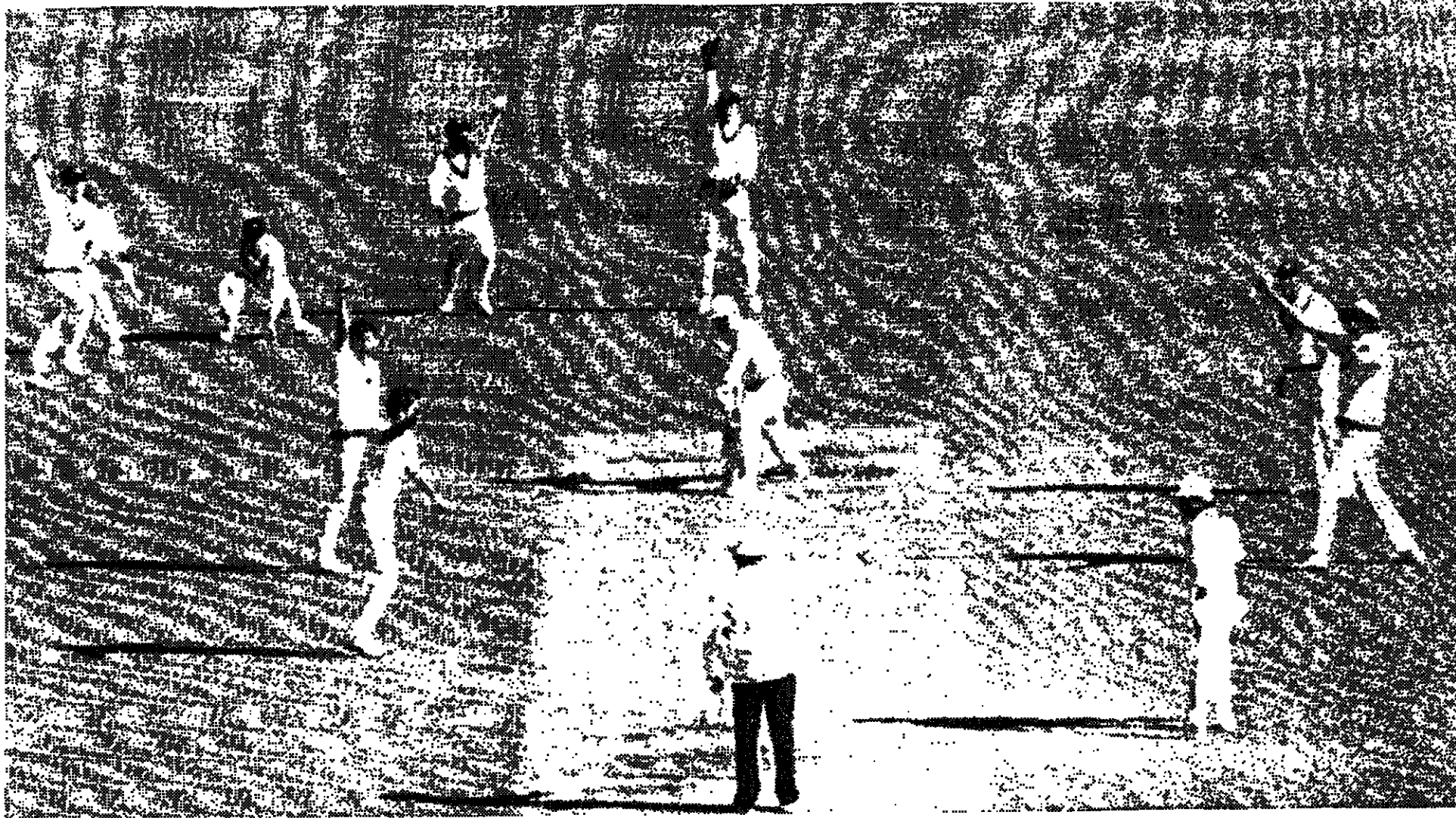
Allan Border and Imran Khan are powerful advocates of what they call "neutrality". So is Viv Richards. So, almost without exception, are the other Test captains, together with their managers.

Imran says that having two Englishmen umpiring Pakistan's recent series with India was the making of it. "For the first time in many years it was a pleasant series. The crowds accepted the umpires' decisions and so did the Press and the players, although they were sometimes the wrong ones."

That the last World Cup in India and Pakistan passed off without any suggestion this or that match was rigged, or this or that umpire had cheated, was because umpires never stood in matches involving their own countries.

Much the same Australian side which had been more than satisfied with the performance of Mahboob Shah, of Pakistan, in the final against England in India, was convinced that he was nothing but a bouncer when he began to give them out in a Test in Karachi a year later.

In Australia's series with Pakistan, which started only a week ago, there is already dissatisfaction. Among Pakistanis because of the frequency with which they were adjudged leg-before in the first Test; and among Australians because the way it happened — six leg-before in Pakistan's second innings, including the



Court of appeal: Australian fielders arise in unison, pressuring the umpire into a decision, as Terry Alderman, the bowler, attempts to claim a Pakistani wicket. The verdict was "out"

last wicket as time was fast running out has been allowed to detract from their victory.

In Australia, and also, I believe, the West Indies, umpires are not themselves enamoured at the idea of an international panel — a view shared by the Australian Cricket Board (ACB), who will discuss the issue today.

"Most umpires reach their peak between 40 and 50, and only the English are full-time professionals. The rest of us have other jobs," Tony Crafter, one of Australia's most experienced umpires,

said. "How can you expect a man of that vintage to chuck in his job, his career, his superannuation, just to go on an international panel? If he fails dismally, he could be out of a job."

Peter McConnell, one of the umpires in the recent Test in Melbourne, said: "I know how high the ball bounces in Perth and how much it spins in Sydney, but I am not sure about pitches in Karachi and Christchurch or at Lord's."

"Local knowledge is a big thing for umpires and I worry that, after a year of neutral umpiring, the players would

revert to their criticism for different reasons. The umpires will cop it in the neck, anyway."

There is some truth in all that. There are also administrative difficulties to be overcome, none of them anything like insuperable.

Colin Egar, himself a former Test umpire and now chairman of the ACB, was talking of the possibilities of an international panel as long ago as 1982 at a seminar in Sri Lanka.

Since then, the call for one has got progressively more urgent. "Everywhere you go

there are problems about the umpiring... the game is suffering as a result," Imran has said.

I think, in fact, that as many series would pass without sides choosing to use a panel as with their doing so. England and Australia would almost certainly settle for the status quo. I imagine most sides going to England would, as well as the majority of those coming to Australia.

On the other hand, if Pakistan had been granted their wish and been allowed neutral umpires for their last series against England in Pakistan,

the infamous altercation between Mike Gatting and Shakoor Rana would never have happened.

It is not a matter of neutral umpires being compulsory, but of an official panel being available for those who think that a series would be improved by their using it. As a way of gaining experience, home umpires could be given control, by right, of all one-day internationals.

The umpiring would not necessarily have been much different had John Hampshire and John Holder, for example, been standing at Melbourne a

few days ago, and, to give them their due, the Pakistanis took their disappointment uncommonly well.

There would not have been the same potential, though, for discontentment had Pakistan had the chance before the series started, even if they had not taken it, of having a couple of outside arbiters.

I cannot believe that it is beyond the wit of the ICC to allay Australian fears, devise a scheme that is financially and socially attractive to all umpires, and to give it, say, a two-year trial. But do let's get on with it.

Captains three on Sky TV's tour team

By Steve Acton

Trans World International (TWI), the Mark McCormack-owned television company, which is to provide live ball-by-ball coverage of the forthcoming tour to the West Indies, as well as edited highlights for the BBC, yesterday announced its team of commentators.

Tony Greig, who will be Sky's anchorman, and Tony Lewis, who will anchor the BBC programmes, will provide commentary with the West Indian journalist, Tony Cozier. A third former England captain, Geoff Boycott, will be used as a match analyst.

TWI will also provide programme to a US cable station which serves America's West Indian, Pakistani and Indian communities.

This will be the first time that an England tour of the West Indies has been shown live in Britain and TWI is hoping, eventually, to make a profit on an initial outlay which is in excess of £1 million.

The company will be taking out three and a half tons of equipment including seven cameras, and 16 staff. Another four technicians are being drafted in from the United States and six more have been recruited in the West Indies. TWI will use a 35-foot truck with an eight-metre satellite dish to beam the signal to British viewers via the Intelsat satellite, Major Path One.

A total of 200 hours of live coverage will be available to Sky's 1.15 million subscribers from the five Tests and five one-day games, from early afternoon to late evening.

Cameras will be mounted at both ends and a high-powered portable special effects microphone will be employed.

TWI's coverage will also include England's off-field activities and Bill Sturich, the executive producer, said: "We will not shy away from anything that appears to be controversial. We are not going to stir up trouble nor act as a catalyst for it but we won't turn our heads away because we want to be seen to be independent, both on and off the pitch."

Pride will be tourists' best asset

From Richard Streeton
Johannesburg

The only certainty, as the English cricketers under Mike Gatting left last night for South Africa, is that a considerable drama is about to unfold. Their own fierce professional pride and determination to do well should be the greatest asset as they try to put aside any mental turmoil still lingering.

They have, let it be stressed, made a choice given them by the International Cricket Council's own rules. During the coming years of banishment, they will have ample time to reflect whether their decision was right.

Disillusionment with the English game was a factor for several. In the view of their detractors, though, these cricketers are guilty of moral myopia by putting lucrative cash rewards ahead of all else.

Revised is too strong a word, perhaps, but in many minds a certain stigma will always remain attached to their names. That much is indisputable at this juncture, in spite of the unquestionable changes for the better taking place in South Africa. This background, however unpalatable, has to be

TOUR ITINERARY AND PARTY

TOUR ITINERARY: Jan 20-22: v Combined Bantams (at Kimberley); Jan 23-Feb 1: v South Africa Universities (at Johannesburg); Feb 2-5: v South Africa (at Port Elizabeth); Feb 6-10: v South Africa (at Cape Town); Feb 11-15: v South Africa (at Durban); Feb 16-20: v South Africa (at Durban); Feb 21-25: v South Africa (at Durban); Feb 26-30: v South Africa (at Durban); March 1-5: v South Africa (at Durban); March 6-10: v South Africa (at Durban); March 11-15: v South Africa (at Durban); March 16-20: v South Africa (at Durban); March 21-25: v South Africa (at Durban); March 26-30: v South Africa (at Durban); April 1-5: v South Africa (at Durban); April 6-10: v South Africa (at Durban); April 11-15: v South Africa (at Durban); April 16-20: v South Africa (at Durban); April 21-25: v South Africa (at Durban); April 26-30: v South Africa (at Durban); May 1-5: v South Africa (at Durban); May 6-10: v South Africa (at Durban); May 11-15: v South Africa (at Durban); May 16-20: v South Africa (at Durban); 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Jones revels in leadership and reveals a subtle confidence with a maturing tactical awareness

Model captain sets exemplary standard



Jones: shows genuine world class

Robert Jones represents the very acceptable face of Welsh rugby. On Wednesday afternoon, he went through the drills in Wales's last training session before they meet France tomorrow, during which, as usual, he was unfatigable in the execution of his own finely-honed talents. The time this finished he was preparing to face the media, so often seen as hostile. He answered each question kindly, with courtesy and a smile. Welsh captains have not always been known to be so obliging.

There is no reason why a sportsman, even a national captain for that matter, should be articulate at skills other than those which he displays in the arena. But it helps. No reason why he should devote so much time pleasing a voracious band wagon of questioners, either. But the world expects its sporting heroes to do so. Fresh faced, clean cut, compact and dapper, Jones faced a couple of dozen scribblers, three television crews in turn, and four more radio interviews. Job done, he went home to tea. He set an exemplary standard throughout. The rest of the week he can now devote to a Swansea-based finance company for whom he works.

"All this goes with being a Welsh captain," he says. "I'm not



Gerald Davies

complaining. It has to be done. It is an additional pressure, but that's the position I'm in and one I've always wanted. I like to take command.

"I think I play better with responsibility. I like to do the talking myself, listen to the players and encourage them. In fact, a captain doesn't have to make too many decisions on behalf of a team. Players get on with their own game. But the ones the captain does make are usually the important ones." His first time was against the All Blacks.

He has captained teams at every level from the West Wales Under-11s, progressing through Cwmawte Comprehensive School and so on to play 12 times for the Welsh Schools. He played cricket, too.

At that stage, John Hiew Williams, rugby coach to the schools, forecast a glittering future for Jones, who has always played at scrum half. This was far more perceptive than a senior Welsh selector who, when Jones was playing for Swansea whilst still at school but even then had that aura

of mature class, made the extraordinary comment that Jones had no part to play in his plans.

Within two years he was in the Welsh team and now four years later, at 24, he collects his 29th cap tomorrow.22 of these he reaped consecutively. But on the Wales tour to New Zealand in 1988 he was dropped for the second international in Auckland and was replaced by Jonathan Griffiths.

"I'm a better player for the experience," Jones reflects. "I became far more relaxed after that. The pressure had begun to build up within me and my game. Because I was so tense, I became stereotyped. I was taking the easy option, not risking anything. Others were saying that I didn't run often enough to take on the opposition."

Jones was straight-jacketing himself. Exclusion from the team released the self-imposed constraints.

"You begin to ask yourself what is the point of it all," he says. "What's all the worry for if this what happens. There is no point in caring too much. So I don't any more. And I'm better for it. Nowadays I stand back a bit and find that, picking and choosing, I have more time to do things. I run a lot more than I did."

His best game for his country, the one when he stamped his unmistakable personality on a match had little, if anything, to do with running. It is not a particular favourite of his, preferring as he does Wales's match against Australia in the World Cup, but all other Welshmen, given also its extra piquancy, would choose last season's game against England. Played in atrocious conditions Jones took the game by the scruff of the neck and, with teasing kicks, he frustrated and nudged England into submission. Some disapproved of the style.

"The conditions quite often dictate the manner of the play," he rightly points out. "You cannot ignore it. Handling on that day was difficult. Our forwards were going well at scrum and lineout and I thought I'd try a few shots behind the English forwards. They paid off. But if England had reacted differently, the rest of the game might have been different. So I kept plugging away making them turn."

His passing, whichever way you please, is swift and accurate as it always has been. His tackling and work rate, especially in cover defence is of a high order. But such play as he showed then, is later with the Lions in Australia, is born of a more subtle confidence and a

maturing tactical awareness. It was not there two years ago against France when he and Jonathan Davies were not of such a mind and a grand slam win for Wales went astray.

For all his matches he has remained, at 5ft 7ins and 11st-12st, and so close to the power-house, remarkable free of injury. Strength around shoulder, hip and thigh, may account for this along with his dedication to conditioning. A nimbleness of foot helps, too. He is in all things technically proficient. He is the only Welsh player of genuine world class, the best scrum half in the world.

"Everything seems to have gone right in our preparation for Saturday," he concludes. "Defence at forward and midfield is crucial against France. We're not tense. We have good players. We need to show it."

While some players shout of their rugby league offers, others swap clubs and jobs, and still others carry the stigma of bad behaviour, none of this attaches to him. Robert Jones is a model player and captain in this unstable time. Around him a Welsh team could be fashioned in a new image for the new decade.

The new recruits playing in green

By George Ace

Ireland's three new caps against England at Twickenham tomorrow. Peter Russell, the stand-off half, Gary Halpin, the scrum-half, and Kenny Murphy, the full back, have at least one other thing in common — all played for Ireland Schools.

Russell and Murphy have both served apprenticeships at provincial level whereas Halpin has still to win a Leinster jersey. The Wanderers' front row man is a quite remarkable character who has crammed a lot of living into his 23 years.

Russell, a bank official, and Murphy, who works in the family garage business in Cork, knew what they were going to do from an early age. Russell went up to Queen's University after leaving Royal Belfast Academical Institution, before joining the bank, and Murphy went to the same university, always going to work in the family business.

Halpin won a four-year athletics scholarship to Manhattan College, New York, and in his freshman year threw a hammer further than any other first-year student in the United States. In his final year he was the collegiate hammer champion. He reached the Olympic qualifying distance but a recurring ankle injury ruined his chances of selection for Seoul.

He created a very favourable impression during Ireland's short tour of North America before the start of this season and if his first cap has come as a result of injuries to other players, it can be confidently predicted that it will be the first of many.

Halpin has the ideal physique for a front-row forward. He stands around 6ft, tips the scales at over 17 stone, is immensely strong and has a rare turn of foot for a prop.

Russell, who missed a year's rugby with a bad knee injury after linking with Instonians, helped his recovery by mapping out a tough training schedule which he still adheres to. He missed a week and a half around on Sunday morning. His wife has her own ideas about it, but a new evening dress and an invitation to London for the game and the after-match celebrations has given her a new lease on life as a rugby widow.

The dress was bought by her husband, not the IRFU. Russell's game has taken on a new dimension over the last two seasons. Initially regarded as a kicking stand-off half, he has changed that image dramatically. A month short of his 18th birthday, he now has the ability to stamp his authority on a match while his distribution is first class. He rarely takes the wrong option and Twickenham should hold no terrors for him.

Murphy, the same age as Halpin, will become the third member of the famous Cork family to represent Ireland. He is the son of Noel, capped 41 times in an international career that spanned 11 years, and a grandson of Noel senior, now deceased, a former president of the IRFU who won 11 caps in the early 1930s.

He is in his third season with Munster and his game really blossomed last year in inter-provincial series, when Munster finished second to Ulster. He had a splendid game against the All Blacks last November and played in the B international against Scotland at Murrayfield last month.

Bristol warn players on sendings-off

Bristol are warning all their players in writing about over-vigorous play following four sendings-off in the club this season (Michael Austin writes).

disciplinary committee will send a letter of caution to Bristol, who could be suspended for a month and have all of their matches cancelled if two more players are dismissed in the next 3½ months. Peter Smith, a prop forward, is the only first-team player to be ordered off.

Bristol's ability to remain cool will be tested by Begles, a French club, at the Memorial Ground tonight.

Three Bristol forwards suffered facial injuries in last year's corresponding game.

Carling advocates caution against weakened Ireland

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

While Ireland and France have had to check in their tracks to overcome injuries as they prepare for tomorrow's opening round of the five nations' championship, and Wales have familiarised newcomers to team plays and old-comers to new positions, all has been quiet on the English front. It is very worrisome.

Ireland flew from Dublin to London yesterday, relieved to have suffered no further distress after the loss on Wednesday of Donal Lenihan, their most experienced forward, and Philip Rainey, their full back. England, meanwhile, worked in the sunshine at the Stoop Memorial Ground, fine-tuning for the Save and Prosper international at Twickenham for which they will be overwhelming favourites.

The England management, however, will be working hard to counter the tales of doom and gloom emanating from Ireland. "I don't presume Ireland are a weaker side," says Carling, the England captain, said at the end of a 100-minute session which embraced warm-up routines and work on set pieces — notably the back row, where Skinner, Winterbottom and Egerton will be playing together for the first time.

"They have been totally written off; no one is giving

them a hope. But they proved against New Zealand in November how hard they are to beat. Their defence is very strong and when they moved the ball and were able to put Crossan away they looked good."

Neil Francis, of Blackrock College, will win his sixth cap in place of Lenihan, who has a facial injury. Francis will bring a rumbustious vigour to the Irish second row, which will seem a strange place without Lenihan, who has played 43 games for Ireland in succession. Kenny Murphy, of Constitution, will make his debut at full back after playing well for Munster during the inter-provincial championship.

"It must be a blow to them, as it would be to anybody, to lose their first-choice lock," Geoff Cooke, the England team manager, said. "We know nothing about their new full back but it will obviously be a tremendous ordeal for him to start his international career at Twickenham."

For that matter, England have four players making their bow in the five nations' championship — Hodgkinson, Bailey, Guscott and Egerton — but all have collected international experience elsewhere. "We are slightly more sure about our style of play and better acquainted with each

other than at this time last year," Carling said.

"We have tried to work out the situations we are likely to be faced with and compose our own style upon them. Last year we slipped up against two sides (Scotland and Wales) who probably read the situation on the day better than we did. There were times when we wanted to play an expansive game but it was too wet to do so all the time."

Carling admitted that England's having scored 58 points against both Fiji last October and Romania last May encouraged confidence, "but the five nations' is a different environment. It's more claustrophobic. But we have the players to move the ball wide and score tries."

England have won their last three games against Ireland — one a non-championship game in 1988 which celebrated Dublin's millennium — and Ireland's last visit to Twickenham brought them a 35-3 defeat in which Chris Oti scored three tries.

All of which means little to the England side: "Saturday will be a new landmark," Carling said. "You can't look back to two years ago or last year. This squad has to be right for this Saturday and to be able to reproduce our style against the other home countries who love nothing better than to beat England."

Tomorrow's match will be refereed by Patrick Robin, of France, who will be officiating in his first five nations' match, though his record includes Italy against Australia in 1988 and Scotland v Fiji last autumn. Robin, aged 40, is from Agen and takes the first of two appointments for France this championship season — their second is the game between Wales and Scotland.

Fred Howard, of England, will referee Wales v France and the southern-hemisphere official this season will be David Bishop, New Zealand's senior referee, who will take the final two championship games: Scotland v England, on March 17, and Ireland v Wales, on March 24.

England standing tall

ADRIAN BROOKS



Out of reach: Dooley, the lock forward, perfects his lineout drill during England's practice at Richmond yesterday

The jokers arrive late to ease the tension for France

By Chris Than

Although physically there is no similarity between Jean-Marie Lapof, the full back and Jean Pierre Garuet, the tight-head prop, who have been recalled by France to face Wales in Cardiff tomorrow, they are both players of consummate skill and burning passion.

Garuet, the potato merchant and a third deputy of Lourdes, has become under the guiding hand of Jacques Fouroux, the French coach. He is a subtle connoisseur of the scrum, the cornerstone of the French forward effort.

There is little room for deceit and complacency in the subterranean world of front row rugby combat where hostilities are governed by an unwritten code of honour and where reputations are made over long periods of time and destroyed overnight.

Despite an incident in 1984, when he became the first French player to be sent off in an international match, Garuet has been universally acclaimed as a fair, yet awkward and tough customer, whose scrummaging technique has given the opposition hookers and tight heads, as well as countless referees, nightmares.

Garuet has earned the grudging respect of his opponents without losing the humour that made him such a popular electoral choice in the holy city of Lourdes.

He belongs to a world of wise old heads whose understanding

of the game is matched by the philosophical appreciation of the world. Garuet will note with amusement that he will always be second choice when the girls are around. Indeed Lapof, chic and graceful, would habitually steal the show.

When Blanco announced his unavailability for the Welsh game, though everyone was unhappy, no-one seemed unduly worried in France. Maybe because of his adventurous talent the French dub Lapof the "white Blanco". His humour matches his playing ability, never allowed to blossom for a long period of time, in a French jersey.

Lapof, together with his Racing Club friend, Frank Mesnel, Eric Blanc and Philippe Guillard, formed the so-called "showbiz", a club within the club, dedicated to the lighter side of the game. The motto of the "showmen" has been play, surprise, amuse, and they set new standards of humour and joie de vivre.

Lapof's gang wore bow ties in the final of the French championship, plus baretts when playing against the Basques of Bayonne, the original club of Lapof's grandfather.

Together the two jokers, Lapof and Garuet, could, while injecting a smile in the tense dressing room atmosphere, help the French side overcome the travails of the autumn build up and return home with a famous and very precious win.

Adair is selected after Hudson chooses Wales

John Hudson's decision to play for the Welsh Students against France yesterday has given Andrew Adair an opportunity to display his talent for the English Universities when they play Irish Universities at the London Irish ground today (David Hands writes).

The English Colleges also have their first outing of the season, when they play Irish Colleges at the Centenary Ground, Osterley, West London. Irish provide the English with six players, among them Appleton, the talented full back, while Subbani (wing) and Hinkins (prop), both from St Paul and St Mary's, Cheltenham, offer substantial senior experience.

Several club matches are, in view of the televised international, being played tonight, among them Nottingham's

game against Wasps, when Taylor makes his first appearance of the year at hooker, and Bristol's encounter with Begles, the French club who will encounter one of their own, Thiliet, on the Bristol wing.

Irish visitors to London also include Old Wesley, who play Rosslyn Park, and Tereure College, who play a London Irish side missing Staples at full back but otherwise at strength for a fraternal confrontation.

Phil John, the Wales B hooker, has cancelled a planned move to Swansea and is to stay with Pontypriid. He was due to play for the Swansea reserve team today but after talking to Pontypriid officials yesterday has decided to remain at Sardis Road.

John, a replacement for Wales against England last season, was overlooked for the international against France tomorrow, with his place on the bench going to Gerin Jenkins, of Pontypriid.

TABLE TENNIS

Prean seeks a reward for his superb season

Carl Prean could be rewarded for the best season of his career by a climb into the higher echelons of the European rankings if he can maintain his excellent form for the Stiga Europe Top 12 tournament which takes place over the next three days in Hanover (Richard Eaton writes).

The Englishman, who is based in Greznan, enjoys playing in Germany and has three players in his group, Zoran Primorac, of Yugoslavia, Andrej Pazounek, of the Soviet Union, and Erik Lindh, of Sweden, that he is capable of beating. His other two opponents, Jorgen Persson, from Sweden, and Andrzej Grubba, the former world cup winner from Poland, have, however, always proved too difficult for him.

The favourite is the world champion and title-holder, Jan-Ov Waldner, who is in the other group. However, the Swede will need to improve on his performance in the English Open a fortnight ago, when he was twice beaten by a little known Frenchman, Nicholas Chetelain.

HOCKEY

Cotton faith in policy of kitchen heat

Bernard Cotton, the England manager, is optimistic that the policy of concentrating on playing against top-class sides in the build-up to the World Cup in Pakistan next month will bring its reward (David Hands writes).

While England's results have sometimes been disappointing as they have attempted to blend promising young players with established internationals, Cotton has insisted that they should accept only the six leading nations in world hockey in order to gain experience.

"We have decided to bring on our young men in the heat of the kitchen and not in the scullery," Cotton said yesterday, a week before the side puts the final competitive touches to its preparation for Lahore in a four-nations tournament in Spain.

Cotton is confident that Martyn Grimley and David Faulkner can fill the gap left by the retirement of Paul Barber after the Olympic Games.

Richard Leman, the England captain, confirmed yesterday that the World Cup would be his final important international tournament.

YACHTING

Dismasted Terlain abandons race

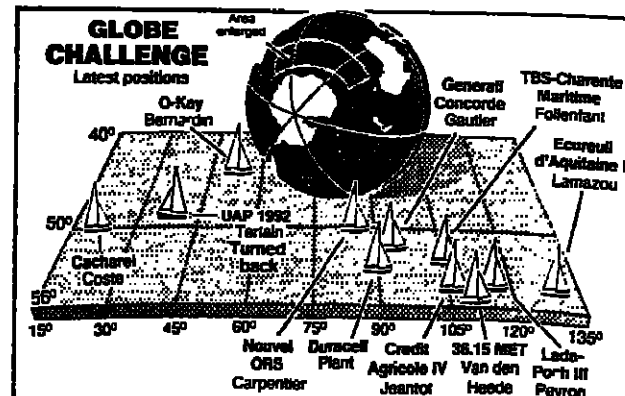
By Malcolm McKee

Jean-Yves Terlain, in UAP, has decided to abandon his attempt to finish the Globe Challenge non-stop singlehanded round-the-world race, 10 days after being dismasted in the South Atlantic. Terlain, of France, lost the rig of his 60ft solo sloop on January 8 when the mast collapsed in three pieces.

In a remarkable feat of single-handed seamanship, Terlain recovered the broken sections of the mast, using the main boom of the yacht as a mizen-mast, re-rigged his boat as a ketch, declaring that he would continue in the race.

Since then he has averaged between three and five knots — about 100 miles a day — and was about 2,000 miles behind the race leaders, with 15,000 miles of the race still to sail. Simple arithmetic makes continued participation pointless. UAP is headed for Cape Town, some 1,300 miles from her present position just south of King Edward Island in the South Atlantic.

Jean-Luc Van Den Heede, in his two-masted 36.15 Met, has moved up to third place behind Rhoan Lemaire and Leick Reynon. In a move similar to that which gave Martella OF a



short-lived lead in the Whitbread race in the same area, Heede has gone further south than his competitors.

Martella lost out when the Whitbread fleet turned north for Australia but the Globe racers do not turn north — they race on direct for Cape Horn.

Only one Briton, Eddie Warden-Owen, ranked fourth, appears in the top 10 in the world-wide ranking system for match race sailors announced yesterday. Harold Cadmore, who skipped Britain's America's Cup 12-metre in Fremantle and made a brief return to the world circuit last year, is ranked twelfth.

The next best Briton is Tim Law, at 25th, followed by David Bedford, at 29th. Titch Blackford, who reached the quarter-finals of the British match race championship, is the leading woman, in 56th place.

In a separate development, the WMRC agreed to allow the IYRU access to the match race circuit by permitting the Union to describe the conference as an IYRU body, changing its name to the World Match Race Sailing Committee.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Runs to resort	Weather + temp	Last snow
ANDORRA					
Soldeu	20 95	fair varied	poor snow	-3 18/1	
Very good skiing on upper slopes, snowing since midday					
AUSTRIA					
Mayerhofen	5 15	art none closed	2 18/1		
Very good snow on Hintertux glacier but crowded					
Obergurgl	20 80	worm varied	0 18/1		
Although many runs are rocky, good piste preparation					
St Anton	30 75	icy crust art snow	1 18/1		
Snow furries giving hope, pistes icy					
Schladming	5 20	icy crust art rain	2 24/12		
Very good skiing on Dachstein glacier					
FRANCE					
Chamonix	8 40	worm varied closed fine	5 22/12		
Skiing still available above 2,000m. Good glacier skiing					
with local guides					
Falke	3 40	icy rocky art fine	-2 22/12		
Pistes becoming moguled and worn. icy patches and rocks on lower slopes					
Isola	15 40	icy varied icy fine	-2 23/12		
Seventeen pistes open, most have good snow but all have icy patches					
ITALY					
Courmayeur	10 45	fair poor closed sun	6 23/12		
Most lifts open, snow cannons making snow at night					
SWITZERLAND					
Altenalp	10 30	fair crust worm snow	-1 18/1		
Good skiing on Hoernli, light snow falling					
Davos	10 60	fair varied closed snow	0 18/1		
Best skiing still on upper person pistes					
Grindelwald	0 5	worm none closed snow	1 18/1		
Oberbach still the only piste open, light snow falling					
Mürren	0 7	icy moguls closed cloud	-3 15/1		
Upper slopes remain icy with rocks showing through					
Saas Fee	3 70	fair varied closed fine	-3 6/1		
Good skiing on glacier above 2,400m, icy patches, no queues					
Villars	0 5	worm none closed cloud	0 22/12		
Very limited skiing above Erstberg					

In the above reports, supplied by representatives of the Ski Club of Great Britain, L refers to lower slopes and U to upper, and art to artificial.

Information supplied by the Scottish Meteorological Office.

Information supplied by the Italian Tourist Office.

Information supplied by the Norwegian National Tourist Office.

MOTOR RALLYING: THE SOVIET UNION MAKES ITS PRESENCE FELT DURING THE PARIS-DAKAR AS THE MAIN PROTAGONISTS BRACE FOR THE MONTE CARLO EVENT

Biasion's expertise likely to prove decisive for Lancia

A three-way battle between two Japanese manufacturers and the Italian Lancia team marks the opening round of the 1990 world championship, the Monte Carlo Rally, which starts today (Stephen Slater writes).

The mild conditions on the rally this year will place the emphasis on power steering, the dry tarmac stages. On these closed public roads, the Lancia Delta Integrale of Miki Biasion, the world champion, is favourite for victory, but both the Mitsubishi Galant of Ari Vatanen, the recent Paris-Dakar Rally winner, and the Toyota Celica of Carlos Sainz, the Spanish charger, have proved their pace.

Toyota also have high expectations of their "new boy", Armin Schwarz, of West Germany, who impressed many last year with his handling of the large Audi Quattro.

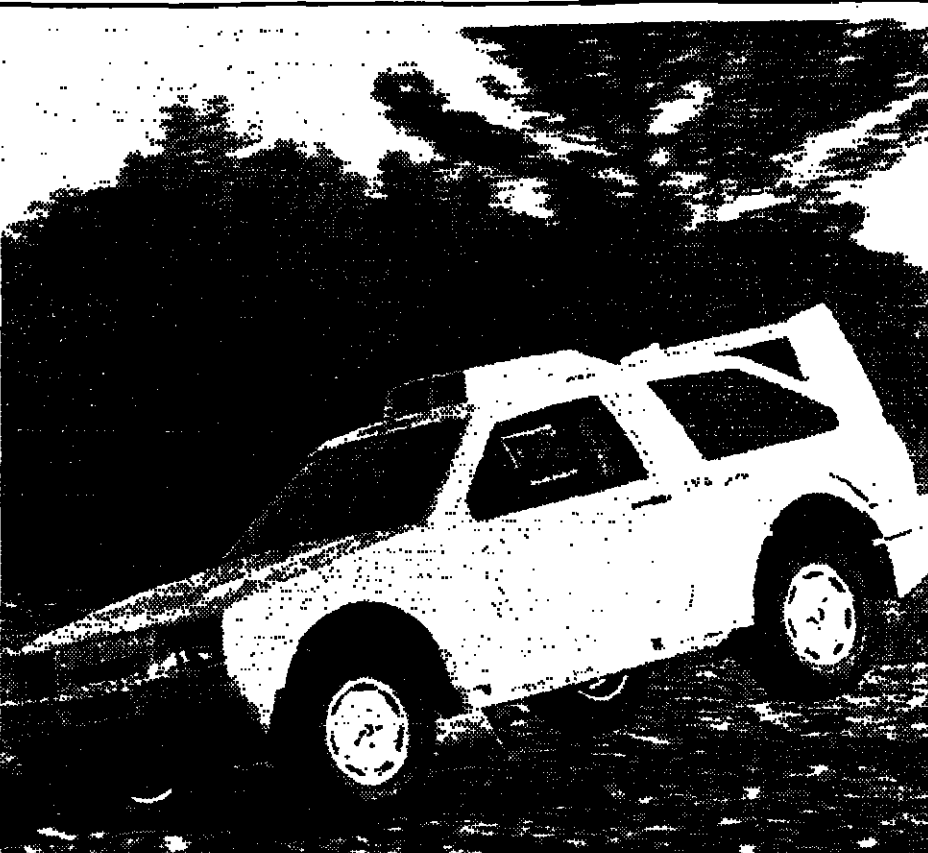
Once it was the aim of every British driver was to compete in the event. Today, the high cost of competing has meant that only two British crews are among more than 200 starters.

Alex Jackson, from West Yorkshire, is competing in a "showroom spec" Group N Toyota, but most British interest will centre on Louise Aiken-Walker, from Duns in Berwickshire.

Already rated as Europe's leading woman driver, she has also proved to be one of the fastest in the two-wheel drive class, with her Vauxhall Astra GTE, and should conditions remain mild, is aiming for position inside the top 10 finishers.

Grand Prix doubt

Sydney (AFP) — A cloud hangs over the future of the Australian motorcycle grand prix after the International Motorcycling Federation cancelled Sydney's plans to host the race in September.



Touchdown Dakar: the Lada Samara made a good impression during this year's desert rally

Lada shows some dark horsepower is ahead

By Stephen Slater

Somewhat in the shadow of the multi-million franc efforts of the Peugeot team, who dominated the first three places of the Paris-Dakar rally, a more humble name on the leader board may represent a dark horse for victory in next year's event.

The Lada cars of Jackie Ickx and Jerome Rivera finished in seventh and eleventh places in the gruelling event and set the fastest time on the toughest special stage of the rally, the hard climb from the giant sand dunes of Tjidikida, in Mauritania, to the mountain ranges of the Naga Pass, in Mali.

Little-known before the Paris-Dakar, the Lada team are a joint Franco-Soviet enterprise, run by Jean-Jacques Poch, the French Lada importer, who has himself successfully competed at the wheel of Lada Niva four-wheel drive. The latest Lada desert racer, however, is a much more sophisticated machine, owing little but its shape to the popular Samara hatchback. Carbon fibre bodywork and an aerospace-designed tubular chassis enclose a mid-mounted, Porsche-developed engine, a six-speed gearbox and four-wheel drive, which gives the Lada Samara T3 a top speed of around 130mph.

Although the final result vindicated the decision by 45-year-old Ickx to join Patrick Tambay, a fellow former Ferrari Grand Prix driver, in the team, their rally was not an easy one. Shortly after arriving in Africa, Tambay's car suffered terminal engine failure on a road section, while Ickx suffered from gearbox problems on the desert stages, forcing mechanics to regular work to keep the car in the event.

The Belgian former Le Mans racer also hit trouble on the longest section of the rally, finishing the 674km stage from Timbuktu to Nema on just three wheels. "We had a blow-out about seven kilometres from the end of the stage, then the wheel smashed and fell off as we neared the finish," Ickx said. "Of course, we still kept going—that's the Paris-Dakar!"

The Lada team reflects the growing interest of Russian and eastern European manufacturers in long-distance rallying. In the heavyweight class for four-wheel drive trucks, Tatra and LIAZ, from Czechoslovakia, and Kamaz, from the Soviet Union, were among the strongest contenders.

The leading British contender in the rally is Andrew Cowan, from Scotland, in his Mitsubishi Shogun. The 53-year-old veteran of victories in the earliest marathon rallies of the 1960s was forced to use all his experience to take a valiant fourth place, suffering from a liver infection which necessitated hospital treatment immediately after the finish.

Other British competitors were less successful. The Landrover of John Saxton and the purpose-built DCAM2 of Richard Partridge both suffered transmission failures in the Libyan desert, while the efforts of Britain's sole motorcycle entrant were also doomed to failure.

FOOTBALL

Luton are aiming to improve their financial outlook

By Dennis Siggy

While firmly denying that Luton Town was for sale or undergoing a financial crisis, Roger Smith, the newly-elected chairman, admitted yesterday that the club was looking for a new director or directors to join the present board to add "financial clout".

Smith, a wealthy businessman who has been on the board at Kenilworth Road for 18 years, succeeded Brian Cole as chairman last week.

He said he had been charged with the task three or four months ago of finding additional resources to ensure the long-term viability of the club and there were five or six people currently short-listed from a long list of applicants.

He anticipated a decision in the next two months. "In the meantime it is business as usual," Smith said. "There is no short-term financial problem."

Arsenal to sign versatile Pates

Colin Pates, the versatile Charlton Athletic defender, is set to sign for Arsenal this morning for a £500,000 transfer.

After the club agreed the fee yesterday, Pates, aged 28, had talks with George Graham, the Arsenal manager, and then promised both clubs a decision on the move by 10pm.

Graham wants to sign him today in time to make him eligible for next week's FA Cup fourth round tie against Queens Park Rangers at Highbury.

Pates, who made 281 league appearances for Chelsea before joining Charlton for £430,000 in October 1988, returned from injury for last Saturday's defeat by Aston Villa.

Trevor Francis, the former England international who was dismissed as the manager of Queen's Park Rangers in November, yesterday agreed to add his considerable experience to Sheffield Wednesday's fight for first division survival.

Francis, aged 35, will sign an 18-month contract next week after accepting Wednesday's offer of a financially lucrative package which is to be based upon the number of senior appearances he makes for the club.

Ron Atkinson, the Wednesday manager, also announced he had agreed terms with Kevin Moran, aged 33, the Republic of Ireland centre-half, who was recently given a free transfer by Sporting Gijon, the Spanish club.

Both men will report for training on Monday morning.

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL

Colne move nearer to League place dream

By Paul Newman

The audacious attempt by Colne Dynamos to win promotion to the GM Vauxhall Conference, when the Football League, is likely to take an important step forward when they discuss a ground-sharing scheme with Burnley this weekend.

Colne, who went full-time last summer after joining the HFS Leagues League premier division, are well on course to win promotion to the Conference this season, but their Holt House ground is considerably short of the required standards.

Graham White, the club's owner and manager, will meet Burnley directors on Sunday to discuss a 10-year deal to share Burnley's 25,000 capacity Turf Moor, which would satisfy the demand of both the League and Conference that promoted clubs should have at least seven years' security of tenure.

White, a highly successful businessman, has been putting Colne into the club he formed 27 years ago, attempting last season to buy out Burnley, who are only five miles away. However, he said yesterday that he was now seeking only a ground-sharing agreement.

Colne are 12 points clear at the top of their table. Second-placed Witton Albion, who have three games in hand and have to play Colne twice, are their only realistic challengers. FA Vase winners last year, Colne are one of the favourites to win the FA Trophy, especially after their 5-0 victory over Altrincham in the first round last Saturday.

Wendstone, Trophy winners five years ago, also went out of the competition this week, losing in a replay at Haverhill. Wendstone's playing fortunes had been improving after the appointment of Alan Gane as manager, although their off-the-field problems continue.

Aylesbury United, who won at Worcester City in a Trophy replay this week, have transferred player-coach, Steve Cox, their leading scorer, and Les Lawrence, a forward, Phillips is leaving after a disagreement with Trevor Gould, the manager.

O'Neill's legal recourse

John O'Neill, the former Northern Ireland international defender, is to sue John Fashanu, the Wimbledon forward, for financial damages over a tackle that he claims ended his career.

O'Neill, aged 31, was forced into retirement after suffering a knee injury in an incident with Fashanu during his debut for Norwich City at Plough Lane in December 1987.

The gathering for England World Cup contenders at Lillisham on January 22 and 23 has been hit by Littlewoods Cup quarter-final replays. Linaker, of Tottenham Hotspur, Walker, Hodge and Pearce, of Nottingham Forest, and Shilton and Wright, of Derby County, will all now miss the two-day session. Steven, of Rangers, has also been forced to the party.

Liverpool's League game against Everton at Anfield on February 3 is to be moved to Prenton Park, Tranmere's ground.

LITTLEWOODS CUP Semi-final draw: Nottingham Forest or Tottenham Hotspur v Sunderland or Coventry City; West Ham United or Derby County.

FA CUP Third round, second replay: Everton 1, Manchester United 1. (Replay: 1-1, 2-1.)

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Gloves come off in world title quest

JAMES GRAY



Looking after No. 1: Benn, left, with Mendy, his manager, on the world title trail yesterday

Benn ready to meet Duran

By Srikanth Sen, Boxing Correspondent

Nigel Benn could meet Roberto Duran for the World Boxing Council middleweight title in May or June.

According to Ambrose Mendy, Benn's manager, Duran has agreed to make a voluntary defence against Benn, who has a higher ranking than Duran, at No. 9, and that Duran would be entitled to the No. 1 challenger's position in the heavier division.

Duff said in Atlantic City last Monday that he would protect Duran was given back his title and allowed to defend against Benn. According to Duff, since Duran was stripped for failing to make a mandatory defence, he could not make a voluntary one if reinstated.

SWIMMING

Shortman and Coull head squad

Five Commonwealth Games swimmers are included in the 37-strong schools' squad selected for the Speedo International meeting at March (Craig Lord writes).

The team will be headed by Austyn Shortman, of Bristol, aged 17, and Joanna Coull, of Sunon Coldfield, aged 16 — the two youngest members of the England squad for Auckland.

ENGLAND SQUAD: 12-14: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 16-18: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 19-21: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 22-24: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 25-27: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 28-30: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 31-33: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 34-36: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 37-39: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 40-42: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 43-45: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 46-48: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 49-51: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 52-54: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 55-57: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 58-60: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 61-63: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 64-66: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 67-69: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 70-72: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 73-75: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 76-78: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 79-81: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 82-84: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 85-87: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 88-90: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 91-93: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 94-96: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 97-99: B. W. Shortman (Bristol), 100-102: B. W. 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TOMORROW'S
SPORTRory Underwood
on the five
nations'
championshipLinford Christie
on his day
of drama
at the OlympicsGordon Cowans
on Aston Villa's
pursuit of
Liverpool

A demonstration of troubles to come

By Alan Lee
Cricket Correspondent

Mike Gatting's breakaway tour squad — the sad, the sour and the simply mercenary men of English cricket — left London for South Africa last night, rejecting a final and very public plea from the anti-apartheid movement to abandon their lucrative mission.

They tried to make a dignified exit, even convening a farewell press conference rather than indulge in charges of shameful secrecy. But the intentions of Gatting, the captain, and David Graveney, the touring side's player-manager, were compromised by the briefest hint of the resentful opposition to which they must quickly become hardened.

First, a photo-call was interrupted by a woman presenting Gatting with a letter, which at first he refused to accept, from Robert Hughes, the MP for Aberdeen North, chairman of the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Then, as Graveney, Gatting and John Embury faced the media in a hotel conference room, a second demonstrator loudly berated the captain, taunting him without response until being led away by hotel staff.

There were just three protesters in all. They had arrived together in an old car and they left in high spirits, apparently pleased to have given the players a foretaste of their immediate futures. As demonstrations go, it was a negligible token but its message was not lost.

Graveney cut short the picture session and seemed on the point of abandoning the press conference when, suddenly and cheerfully, the infiltrator agreed to leave. Despite their whereabouts being a closely guarded secret, the players had easily been un-



Getting the message: Mike Gatting is confronted with another plea from the Anti-Apartheid Movement at the photo-call yesterday

earthed by those in opposition. It will be the same story, on a larger and more alarming scale, wherever they go in South Africa.

None, however, had a late change of heart. On a perfect, spring-like morning, all 16 chosen men arrived at their hotel in suburban Surrey and, publicly at least, there were no confessions of regret.

Gatting himself came the closest. His square-set features have worn a haunted expression more than once in the past two years and it was again in place yesterday as, pale and unsmiling, he con-

firmed the suspicions of all who know him well.

"In truth, I would rather be going to the West Indies with England," he said, before elaborating on the hitherto murky weeks when he debated reversing his decision. "I had some talks with certain members of the Test and County Cricket Board during August. It all fell through because I did not receive certain assurances."

Quite what Gatting sought from the board is unclear. Quite why the board was engaged in doing any sort of deal is another mystery. The

collapse of negotiations, however, condemned this disillusioned man to a role he shows few signs of relishing.

Glib diplomacy is foreign to him, hence his ungarded and oft repeated admission, back in August, that he knew very little about apartheid. Yesterday, he was anxious to point out that he had been sweating out on the subject. As so often with this essentially straightforward sportsman, a political statement sounded slightly absurd.

The matter of why Gatting's tour contract remains un-

signed was not adequately explained. "I have their word and they have mine. That should be good enough," he said, but his further claim that the problem stemmed from his late recruitment holds no water. Greg Thomas and Allan Wells were added to the party a month later and their contracts are signed.

Gatting has received threats, some of them ugly, as have many of the players. He has had the windows of his north London home reinforced. He is going, he says, in the full expectation that

matches will be interrupted. "We will have people coming on the field for sure. I just hope that they protest peacefully and they are dealt with peacefully."

Graveney's eloquence and standing in the game has given credibility to the venture. He has insisted on a team uniform and he will insist on discipline. Now, he spoke for his players on the safety fear. "We all read the papers. We are human beings and we are obviously concerned. We would have to be a bit strange to ignore it all. But until we

arrive, none of us can properly judge the mood."

The players have not practised together during their preparations. Graveney feared it would be provocative. Now, they will not be going into the black townships to coach, for a very similar reason. With this decision, one more justification for the tour has collapsed.

All they are left with is a lot of money for 26 days of cricket in seven weeks — if the demonstrators allow it. And will they win? Gatting fell for it. "Actually," he said, "I don't know much about South Africa's players."

Bacher rejects an offer of compromise

From Richard Streeton
Johannesburg

A few hours before Mike Gatting and his team left London, the National Sports Congress (NSC) made a final, unsuccessful appeal to the South African Cricket Union (SACU) here yesterday to abandon the tour. In return the NSC said it believed it would be feasible, within six months, to negotiate the formation of one organization for South African cricket, uniting all races.

"It is not too late even at this stage to cancel the tour and I want to reiterate the offer I first made last October," Krish Naidoo, the NSC general secretary, said. "There is a lot of goodwill on our side but it can only be diminished by

the tour, which will also lower support for SACU's development work in the townships."

Naidoo said there were only the two governing bodies for cricket in the Republic, the SACU and the South African Cricket Board. "We would be prepared to start talking immediately and unification could be completed within six months. This tour can only be a step backwards for South African cricket."

The NSC is the sporting arm of the Mass Democratic Movement and has emerged as the most active opponents of the tour. Naidoo will be among an estimated 1,500 demonstrators expected to be protesting at the airport today when the English players arrive.

Shortly before Naidoo made his final appeal, Dr Ali Bacher, SACU's managing director, had confirmed that nothing would stop the tour from going ahead. He knew of the NSC's proposal, as well as others from those opposing the tour.

He said he appreciated that his own future was at stake and the tour and the difficult decisions involved with it had affected him emotionally. Nobody, though, could guarantee what lay ahead politically in the coming year. "I weighed everything up and have no qualms that the wrong decision has been made," he said.

Meanwhile, the possibility that the continuous actions of anti-apartheid protesters

could degenerate into violence has brought an early warning from General Johan van der Merwe, South Africa's police commissioner. A statement from his Pretoria office said that any violence committed would be viewed extremely seriously.

The police would not hesitate to take "drastic action" against the perpetrators or those who behaved in a manner which could lead to violence. "I wish to assure the public that the police will perform their duty actively and purposefully in order to protect spectators and players," the statement said.

Elsewhere, in Pretoria a Government spokesman declined to comment on the tour, which, it was felt, was a matter

for the cricket authorities alone.

SACU has finally disclosed how the forthcoming seven-week tour will be financed. In recent months there has been speculation that SACU were hard pressed to find sponsors. This followed the bomb scares and other protests which ensued after the involvement of the First National Bank and other businesses in the tour by an international rugby union side last August.

To avoid firms being subjected to a reputation of this, Dr Bacher said the SACU had rejected the sponsorship offers it had received and would rely solely on gate receipts and the sale of television rights. The Government's controversial tax release for firms sponsor-

ing sport would therefore not be a factor.

The tour would cost four million rand (about £1 million). SACU expected about 200,000 people would watch the games and hoped to obtain two million rand from this source after the provincial union staging the match had taken 12.5 per cent for administrative costs.

The other two million rand needed would come from a deal with the state-owned South African television service which would show 80 hours of live cricket. Should gate receipts exceed the predicted amount, these and any other profit would be ploughed back into the game at lower levels. No direct Government subsidy was involved in the tour at all, he stressed.

Legal hurdle
fails to
halt Gatting

Mike Gatting and John Embury were cleared to fly to South Africa by two High Court judges yesterday. Lord Justice Watkins and Mr Justice Nolan quashed summonses by Marylebone magistrates requiring the cricketers to attend the trial of eight demonstrators who held up a match at Lord's.

This is not due to held until January 25, which would have meant the captain missing the opening match.

There were about a dozen demonstrators at Heathrow airport to see the team off last night. "Is this what you call a demonstration?" Gatting asked, adding that he had no qualms about going.

END COLUMN
Concern
over a
Chinese
puzzle

By Richard Eaton

This weekend, the national council of the English Table Tennis Association (ETTA) expects to begin its discussions on how it might make use of the biggest windfall ever to land on its doorstep, the extraordinary Chinese player, Chen Xinhua.

Chen is one of the greatest players of the 1980s, and arguably the greatest exponent of an attractive yet dying breed — the nimble-footed, away-from-the-table defenders.

But Chen is more than that, a player who combines defence and attack, back spin and top spin, in such unusual rhythms and combinations that it is like hearing simultaneously new arrangements of two old songs and finding they unexpectedly harmonize.

Chen is also a showman and a philosopher, an acrobat and a thinker, and an easy, warm-hearted communicator, even with people whose culture and language have been mysteries to him. He has a thousand Europeans eating out of his hand during his exploits at the English Open two weeks ago.

Those spectators warmed to the person as much as to the player. There seems little doubt, therefore, that if everything were to go right, Chen Xinhua, the fellow from Foshan who chose a wife and a home in Huddersfield, could become the biggest celebrity the game has ever seen.

Can there be any doubts that he should be welcomed and selected for England as soon as possible after he becomes available in May? To some people, there are. Indeed, Chen's situation may be hampered around amid lively argument before the exact course of his future is decided. There remains those with worries about whether people



Chen: awaits celebrity status will relate to him, despite his televised heroics at the Open. If so, the likely proposal from the ETTA chairman, John Preen, that Chen be required to have a British passport as well as satisfy the ITTF two-year domicile rule, may gain ground. There are even some who question whether, at the age of 30 this month, he is really a long-term prospect.

What some of Chen's sceptics appear to have overlooked is that, because he was ordered to throw matches as part of China's communal philosophy, he sees himself as an under-achiever. He might have been world champion. He has dreams to be resurrected.

There are also those who question Chen's commercial ambitions once he has a passport which will free him to come and go to the more affluent table tennis countries of Europe. Will the lure of the lucre prove too strong? Does he have a genuine loyalty to his adopted homeland?

Two new developments may give some answers to those questions. On Sunday, Chen is giving his services to 40 disabled players at a sports hall in Preston. Free, gratis and for nothing. This does not seem like the action of a financial opportunist and, this week, he has been home-hunting in Chesterfield.

He wants to move to take him nearer to a nucleus of players, including Alan Cooke, Desmond Douglas and Bradley Billington, who could provide important practice. And also to be closer to a new business partner, who hopes to set Chen up with several deals as coach and entertainer in British holiday camps throughout the summer.

All this hints at long-term economic and athletic planning in this country, and suggests that he may be taken on trust. But the battle to win hearts and minds is not over. Xinhua apparently means New China. Will he be accepted as part of the New England?

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On line to serve you

President is deselected

By Martin Searby

Viscount Mountgarret, the man who "beat the bat" in a call for unity in Yorkshire cricket, will not be nominated as president of the club for a further term at next month's annual general meeting following a debate at Headingley.

Lord Mountgarret was left standing outside the committee room for 45 minutes before he was given the news of his deselection by Brian Close, acting chairman of the general committee in the absence of Brian Walsh, QC, and he immediately left. It was an undignified retreat for the man who took on a position no one else wanted in 1985 after the new committee, which overturned Yorkshire's old guard, spent six months

approaching men of similar stature. He won a standing ovation at his first AGM when he told a packed meeting in a Leeds hotel: "Hailsham rang the bell for Britain and I'm beating the bat for Yorkshire."

But if the committee wanted a puppet Mountgarret was the wrong man; he took centre stage, as he put it, "knocking a few heads together" to get a common-sense approach to the county's problems.

His style ruffled a number of feathers but he made an immense contribution as the county entered a decade of new optimism with a cricket manager and a young captain. "I am saddened and very hurt rather than angry at the

way I have been treated," he said yesterday. "I have always made it clear that I would not stay where I was not wanted, but to be left standing about for three quarters of an hour made me feel as though I were on the carpet. I cannot but think there was a more dignified way to go about things if I was not wanted. I really am astonished by such an extraordinary behaviour."

The Yorkshire committee clearly wants a president who is prepared to be a mere figurehead and keep his nose out of the club's affairs. Yorkshire had no comment to make on Lord Mountgarret's demise but the committee will meet on Sunday to consider a nomination to put before the AGM.

Finance chief
resigns from
Universiade

The head of finance for the company organizing the World Student Games, to be held in Sheffield next year, has resigned, it was disclosed yesterday (Peter Davenport writes). An official announcement said that Danny Simson, who had been with Universiade GB Ltd for 15 months, had left his post for "personal reasons" to return to his family at their home in Edinburgh.

Simson was appointed by Peter Burns, the company's former chief executive, who was dismissed shortly before Christmas.

It was acknowledged by sources close to the company last night that, although there was no question of any wrongdoing in connection with the finances, Simson had felt under pressure because of the criticism of the financial running of the company.

Tycoon to
aid Games

Hong Kong (AFP) — A Hong Kong business tycoon has donated 10 million Hong Kong dollars (about £788,000) for the Asian Games in Peking in spite of boycott calls from students in protest at the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 4.

Li Ka-shing has extensive business links in China and has contributed to various projects, including a university and hospital in his hometown of Shantou, in southern China.

Scramble in

A new competition for amateur golfers, making use of the scramble format, is to be launched this year in Great Britain and Ireland by William Teacher and Sons in association with Golf World.

SPORT IN BRIEF



Wattana: coffee contract

Big break
James Wattana, the Thai snooker professional playing in his first season, has been given a one-year £50,000 contract, with a further one-year option, to endorse Nescafe coffee. When able to do so, Wattana will wear the company's logo on his waistcoat, and his manager, Tom Moran, will press for a change of rules to permit him to do so in televised British tournaments.

Prize winner

Lawrie Madden, aged 34, the long-serving Sheffield Wednesday defender, is to receive an MA degree in leisure management from Sheffield University tonight. Madden already holds a BA in economics from Manchester University and a diploma in market research from North-East London Polytechnic.

Bears play

Birmingham's team for the International League of American Football, which gets under way in April, will be known as Birmingham Bears.

Boxing shrine

The thatched cottage where Bob Fitzsimmons, Britain's only world heavyweight champion, was born, is to be turned into a boxing museum after being sold at a knock-down price of £34,000.

Formula One
race planned
for Donington

Donington Park is planning to host its first official Formula One motor race since 1938 at Easter. Tom Wheatcroft, owner of the Derbyshire circuit, has been negotiating with the Formula One Constructors' Association to stage the meeting on April 15 and 16.

The proposal was discussed at a meeting of Formula One team directors in London last week and a decision is expected shortly.

The race would not be part of the World Championship, but could expect to attract a top-class entry, as it would fill a long gap in the championship calendar between the Brazilian Grand Prix on March 25 and the San Marino event on May 13.

Donington hosted the British Grand Prix from 1935 to 1938.